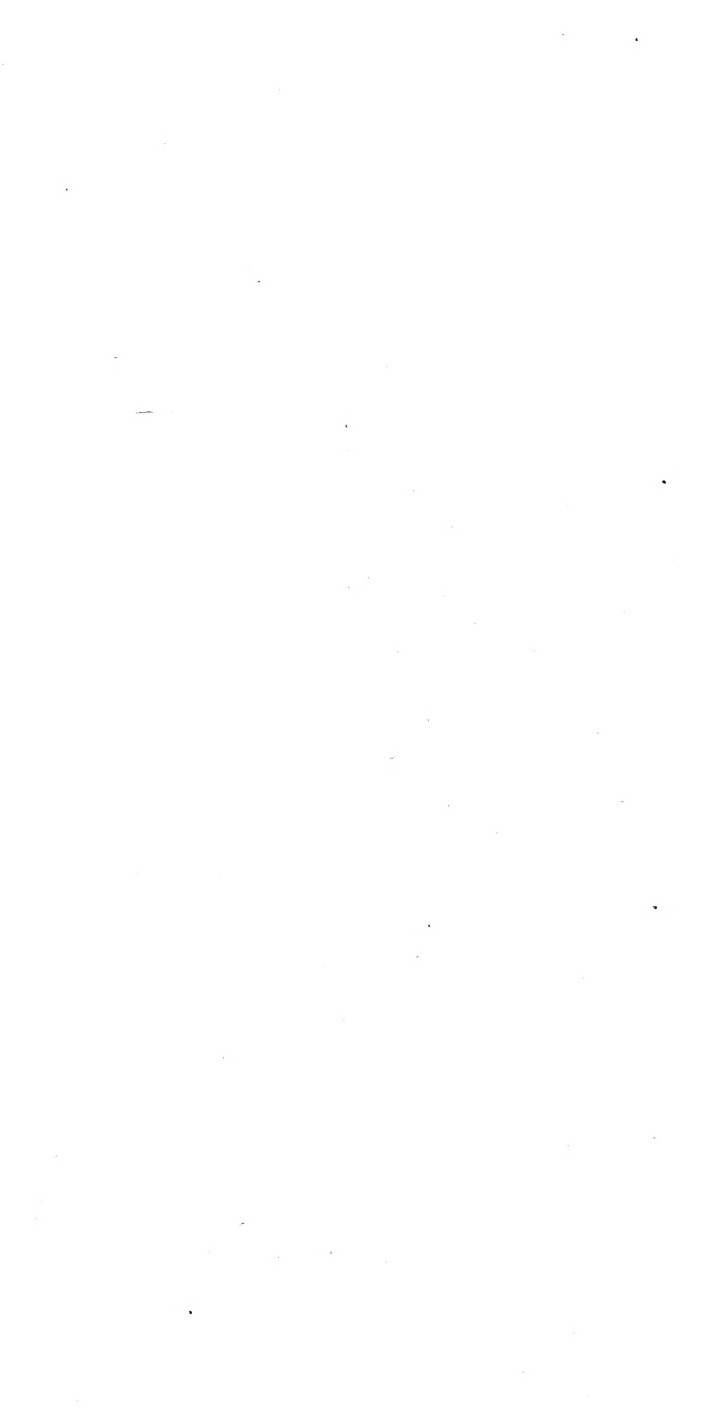
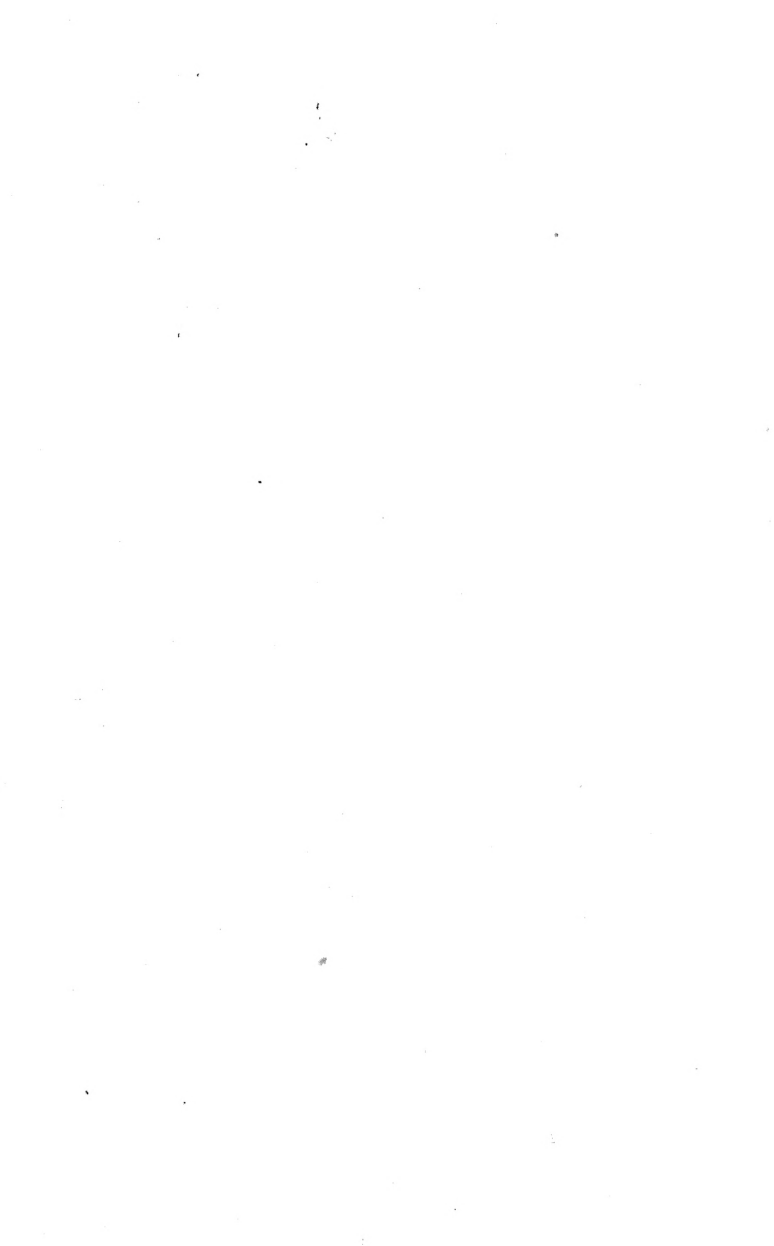


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HISTORIC PRINTING TYPES



HISTORIC PRINTING TYPES

A LECTURE

READ BEFORE THE GROLIER CLUB OF NEW-YORK, JANUARY 25, 1885,
WITH ADDITIONS AND NEW ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

THEO. L. DE VINNE



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THE GROLIER CLUB
MDCCCLXXXVI

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HISTORIC PRINTING TYPES.

I



NO HANDICRAFT receives so much attentive observation as printing. But the observation of the ordinary reader, however attentive it may be, is usually superficial and imperfect. Types are seen but not regarded: it is only the information conveyed by types that is considered. Few general readers know by name the different sizes or styles of types; fewer still could identify the types made or used by famous printers.

To men whose limited time compels them to care more for the ends than the means of knowledge, this want of consideration is pardonable. Life is short, and even a studious man may be excused for neglecting typography, when English literature is so deficient in instructive technical works on this subject. Our books on typography are

written for printers, and interest printers only. There is no popular treatise about book types; nothing that gives us in succinct and connected form information about their designers and makers, and that tells us why styles once popular are now obsolete.¹

The subject is not trivial. The services that have been rendered to literature by types, and the esteem in which good printing and fine editions have always been held, should dignify the agents by which these results have been produced. Nor is the subject meager. There is more to be said about types than can be fairly told in an evening's lecture. Much must be left unsaid. The origin, and the early forms of letters, and their frequent changes before they were fixed in types, as well as the methods of making types, cannot be described for want of time. I propose to consider only the "faces" or general appearance of the plain types of our standard books—the faces or styles that have been selected by eminent printers and are found in good editions.

To do this fairly, one must begin with the Black Letter, or the Gothic character.

¹ Moxon's "Mechanic Exercises" (London, 1683), Mores's "Dissertation upon English Typographical Founders and Foundries" (London, 1778), and Hansard's "Typographia" (London, 1825) are the only books in English, known to me, which attempt to fully treat of type-founding. Moxon writes chiefly on the practice of type-making.

Mores entirely neglects the practical part: he writes with wit and zeal about early English types and type-founders, but not always with exactness. These books are scarce. Hansard is full and exact concerning English types and founders of his own period; but he has little to say about the types of printers on the Continent.

The Black Letter or Gothic Type of the Early German Printers.

THE oldest type-printing containing an authentic date is a Letter of Indulgence dated 1454, in which the date is written in. The oldest type-printing containing an authentic printed date is the Psalter of 1457, which bears the imprint of John Fust of Mentz and Peter Schoeffer of Gernszheim. We also know of a Latin Bible, in folio, 42 lines to the page, in double columns, one copy of which contains the written statement of the illuminator that his work on the book was finished at Mentz in the year 1456. And there is another edition of a Latin Bible in double columns, 36 lines to the page, which was probably done before 1459.

First books
from types.

All these pieces of printing are correlated. The types are of different sizes, but of marked resemblance as to cut or style. I shall not here discuss the relative claims of Fust and Schoeffer to the invention. It is enough to say that it is the general belief that these books are the work, separately or jointly, of Gutenberg, Fust, and Schoeffer; and that they were "made by a new and unheard-of art," or, as the Psalter of 1457 explicitly states, "by the mas-

Typography
dependent on
type-founding.

terly invention of printing and also of type-making." In this notice, as in other notices by early writers, we find the implication that the real invention of printing was the invention of practical types.

One of these books, the Bible of 42 lines, is emphatically The Book, not because it is the Bible and to be regarded as the Book of Books, but because it is generally regarded as the first printed book. It is not only the typographic *editio princeps* of what had been a manuscript, but *princeps facile* over all books, in matter as in manner. It stands like a monument at the great turn between the old and the new method of manufacture. It shows the best features of each method—the dignity, the quaintness, the decorative beauty of the manuscript, and the superior exactness and uniformity of the printed book.

The value of the work may be inferred from the prices paid for it within the last half century—from \$10,000 to \$25,000 a copy, according to condition and circumstances. These seem large sums. But greater prices have been paid for cracked and faded paintings, and for mutilated statues: the sum of \$200,000 has been asked in this city for a Madonna not larger than a barrel-head, and as much by another dealer for a collection of medieval pottery. The prices are boldly asked because the average buyer has more regard for paintings or pottery than for books. But has not this book a greater value in its history and associations? Is not the first product of an art which has done

Bible of 42
lines has the
first place.

Its value as
evidence of
early skill.

qꝫ pꝛes nꝛi portare ponimꝛs : Sed
pꝫ gratiã dñi ihu credimꝫ saluari quẽ
admodũ ⁊ illi. Vacant aut̃ oīs milti-
tudo ⁊ audiebãt bartholẽ ⁊ paulũ nar-
rantes quanta dꝫ fecisset signa ⁊ pro-
digia in gentibus pꝫ eos . Et postqꝫ ta-
mentũ respēdit iacobus dicens. Viri
scientes audite mꝛ. Symon narrauit
queadmodũ pꝫ dñs visitauit in-
imere rꝫ gentibus pplũ nomini suo : ⁊
huic concordant verba pꝫhetarũ : sicut
scriptũ ē. Post hec reuerter et reedifica-
bo tabernaculũ dauid qđ decedit ⁊ diru-
ta erũs reedificabo : ⁊ erigam illud : ut
requirãt ceteri hominũ dñm ⁊ omnes
gentes super quas inuidiatũ ē nomen
meũ dicit dñs faciens hec. Notũ a se-
culo ē dñs opus suũ. Propter quod
ego iudico nō inquietari eos qꝫ rꝫ gen-
tibus auertunt ad deũ sed scribere ad

Fac-simile of the types of the Bible of 42 lines, with the rubricator's marks on the capitals. Photographed from a fragment of the original in the collection of Mr. David Wolfe Bruce.

so much for the pleasure, the knowledge, the civilization of the world of more value as an historical relic than any work of brush or potter's wheel? Mine may be the pride of a man who magnifies his art, yet it is my belief that the time will come when a copy of this Bible of 42 lines will be held of more value than any painting. For, although it is accepted as the first of all printed books, there is nothing about it that seems experimental—nothing that is timid, or petty, or mean. It bears the stamp and seal of a great invention, and a perfected invention. One need not scrutinize it to be convinced that it was the work of a great inventor who knew the value of his art and knew how to use it.

The work of a
great inventor.

Looking at it in this light one can appreciate, even if he does not fully assent to, the statement of an eminent book-lover that "the first book is better than the last"; that in strength of paper, in blackness of ink, in picturesqueness of letter, and in many artistic features, the Bible of 42 lines is and ever will be a model of style.

Mr. G. W.
Smalley.

Yet it is a curious fact in literary history that this book, which is so much admired now, was practically out of use, and held in light esteem a hundred years after it was printed. The finding of a copy in the library of Cardinal Mazarin at the close of the xviiith century gave it the misleading name of the Mazarin Bible; its identification as the work of Gutenberg gave it merit in the eyes of bibliographers. But proper recognition came at a later

Neglected for
two centuries.

date; it was reserved for the xixth century to appraise the book at its true value.

We have to ask, why was this book so long neglected? One has but to look at this fac-simile of a part of a page to get the answer. The text is not easy to read. The types are black, compressed, and closely fitted to indistinctness; the text is not divided in verses; contractions are frequent. The eye aches for that relief of white space within and around each letter which is to be found in all modern book types. No one who wishes to read a Latin Bible, to read it and not look at it, would ever select the Bible of 42 lines if a modern copy of the text could be had. It is for this reason, and this reason only, that this edition of the book fell into disuse. It was supplanted by editions in smaller types that were more easily read; editions that had the divisions of book, chapter, and verse more clearly marked by the printer than had been done by the illuminator; editions in plainer types that did not offend the eye with blackness. I put special stress on this quality of being easily read, for, whatever may be the merit of a book in other features, it will be ultimately approved or condemned by the reader on the test of its legibility.

See page 18.

Not a readable book.

The fac-simile appended does not show the beauty of the full page as that page appears in the few copies that have been enriched by the professional illuminators of the xvth century. The size and splendor of the many colored initial letters, and the grace of the painted decorative

See page 18.

Its beauty largely made by decoration.

Not attractive
when it was
not decorated.

borders, did much to relieve the somberness of the black text. It was the gold and bright color put in by hand that made the book attractive. Deprived of these graces the letters were not beautiful. Without doubt, the letters were fairly copied from some unknown manuscript model; fairly copied as to shape and size, and the form of page and arrangement of text were also imitated. The printer supposed that the blanks which had been left for initials and border would be filled in by the buyer. The book was incomplete without painted initials and border, for these were the features which made the work attractive to ecclesiastics then as it does to artists now. Here was a miscalculation. Not every buyer of the printed book had the ability or the means to decorate it. We may rightfully suppose that the largest number of copies never had any decoration. Destitute of bright color the text was somber, and this somberness gradually put the edition out of fashion.

Pointed Black
Letter an eccle-
siastic type.

In Germany, this pointed Black Letter was the style always preferred for the service books of the Church. The more magnificent the book, the more formal and stately the character. Perhaps the finest specimen of this letter in a printed book was shown in the Bamberg Missal of 1481, which has text types three-quarters of an inch high.

For the books that were made to be bought and read by the laity, a simpler form of Black Letter was in great favor. A good example of this form may be seen in the Catholicon

of 1460, which is attributed to Gutenberg. The same form may be seen in the Letter of Indulgence of 1454, in the edition of Cicero of 1465, printed by Schœffer, and in many of the popular books of the early German printers. This form of letter has no simple distinctive name: French bibliographers call it *Lettre de somme*; English bibliographers, Semi-gothic. I have called it Round Gothic, to distinguish it from the Pointed Gothic.

Round Gothic
preferred by
the laity.

Leues. a. um. in leua exponitur.
Lex legis. Sz a lego. gis. legi qz legitur. Et est
lex ius scriptū, asciscens honestū. phibens cont
rū. nē lex ē scriptū populo p mulgatū. magistra
tu querente et populo respondente. Solebat enī
magister ciuitatis cum aliquā legem uellet inhibi
ere ascendere pulpiti in media concōne et querē
a populo si uellet illud ratū esse. et accepta rīssio
ne a populo deinceps p lege habebat. fm hug.
¶ Et scias qz lego. gis. cor le in pnti si in pterito
prod. Vnde lex legis tenet naturam huius pteri
ti legi. cum primam prod. xv. Non decet illa legi
q sunt contraria legi. De lege nali uide in conscia
Lexis inte pstatuz pausacō uel sermo. et in bar
barolexis b hug. Pap uero dicit. Lexis grece. lati
ne locucō. i. quolibet silba uē uox que scribi debz

Types of the Catholicon of 1460, attributed to Gutenberg.

Neither the Pointed nor the Round form of Gothic was entirely acceptable to German printers and readers of the xvth century. Apparently there was a craving for more of elaboration and complexity. The type of Erhard Rewich,

German print
ers preferred
ornate type.

as shown by him in 1486, seems the first departure toward a series of new forms which finally led to the general use of the modern German character. The types of the Theuerdank,¹ a poem printed at Nuremberg, in 1517, by Schoensperger, more florid, more complex, fuller of flourishes, may be accepted as the motive if not the model for the style of type known as German Text. Modern taste would not accept this ornate letter as an improvement on the older, simpler form, but its peculiarities were gradually accepted by all German printers. Considering its angularity, the name, Fraktur, which Germans give to their modern German character is well chosen. The Round Gothic letter, modified and simplified, finds use among German printers under the name of Schwabacher.

The popularity of the German forms of letters was not disturbed at all in Germany by the introduction elsewhere of the Roman character. Educated readers favored Roman letters, but they were not at all acceptable to the common people who, as a class, were just beginning to buy books. In all civilized countries, outside of Italy, the written text-books of schools were in black and pointed letters. All the early prayer-books and books of devotion were in pointed letters. To readers accustomed to this character, a book in Roman letter was not easily read. This prejudice still

¹ This book shows more than ordinary skill in type-founding. There were good type-founders elsewhere: in 1493, Koberger of Basel, printed an

octavo Bible in Gothic characters, of the small size known to us as Nonpareil, which makes about twelve lines to the American inch.

Types of the
Theuerdank.

Fraktur

Schwabacher.

Black letter a
favorite in all
countries

survives. The German statesman, Bismarck, not long ago put on record his objections to Roman types in German books. He tells us that he had, watch in hand, compared the time he had given to the reading of a page in German type and a page in Roman type, and that the reading of the Roman page was a greater tax on his attention, and required much more time.

Bismarck's
dislike of the
Roman letter.

The reader who is not familiar with German will receive this opinion with surprise. He will say that the Roman letter, so much simpler in form, should be more easily read; and the following comparison of German letters that are perplexingly similar with Roman equivalents that are clearly distinct will strengthen this conclusion:

Ĉ	Ċ	Ĝ	Ė	ʒ	ʒ	ʒ	ʒ
C	E	G	S	B	V	I	F
r	ŕ	f	f	h	h	d	a
r	x	f	s	h	y	d	a

Dr. Taylor suggests that the frequency of the use of spectacles among young men in Germany, as compared with England, France or Italy, may be due in great part to the more trying nature of German types.

Alphabet, vol.
II., p. 184.



III

Early Roman Types.

Printed in
partnership
from 1465 to
1473.



SWINHEYM and PANNARTZ, the first printers in Italy, began their work in the monastery of Subiaco, near Rome, with new types of the Roman form. We do not know what model they had for the cutting of this letter. It may have been angular and faulty, but it is more probable that Swinheim and Pannartz could not entirely free themselves

a NIMADVER TI sepe Donate plurimos id existiare:
quod etiam nonnulli philosophorum putaverunt: non irasci
deū. quoniam uel benefica sit tantūmodo natura diuina:
nec cuiq̃ nocere prestātissime atq; optie congruat pōtarl.
uel certe nil curet oīno. ut neq; ex beneficencia eius quicq̃

Sweinheim and Pannartz, Subiaco, 1465. From their edition of Lactantius.

Sweinheim
died 1477. Pan-
nartz died 1476.

from their prejudices in favor of pointed letters, and that they unwittingly made Roman types with many of the features of Black Letter. Their fashion of Roman is thick and compressed, almost as thick and black as the Black

Letter, but it has the merit of a proper space of white between the lines. It does not seem to have been a popular type, for when these printers went to Rome, they produced another form of Roman type which was not so black, nor so condensed, but it was not more pleasing.

Rebatus familiaris meus ad me
 scripsit te exquisisse quibus i lo/
 cis esse: molesteq: ferre q me pp/
 ter ualitudinem tuā cū ad urbem
 accessissē non uidisses: et hoc tē/

Sweinheym and Pannartz, Rome, 1467. From their edition of Cicero.

Next year, 1467, came to Rome a rival German printer, Ulrich Hahn, who, in compliment to Italian tastes, also printed his first book in an imitation of Roman letter.

Printed in
 Rome from
 1467 to 1478.

Ogitanti mihi sepe mi-
 nimo & memoria uetera repetenti perbeati fu-
 isse. Q. frater illi uideri solēt qui in optima
 RE. PV: quom & honoribus & rerum ges-
 tamum gloria florerent eum uite cursum

Ulrich Hahn, Rome, 1468. From his edition of Cicero.

A very bad imitation it was; showing just as distinctly the influences of a German-like preference for the Gothic form. It was no improvement on the Roman of his rivals.

If we had never been provided with better forms of Roman type, Black Letter might still be in use everywhere.

John died 1469.
Nothing is
known of Vin-
delin after 1477.

The first fair Roman types were made by John and Vindelin de Spira, of Venice, and were shown by them in

S I ipsa Resp. tibi narrare poss& quō sese haber&:
non facilius ex ea cognoscere posses: q̃ ex liberto
tuo Phania: ita est homo nō modo prudens: uer
etiā uir &quus: & quod uidi curiosus. Quapropter
ille tibi omnia tibi explanabit: Id enim mihi & ad

John and Vindelin de Spira, 1469. From their edition of Cicero.

their edition of Cicero, of 1469. Here we have something of the roundness, simplicity, and perspicuity of the Roman character. Yet it was but an approximation: the proportions of the letters are not good.

Misisti nuper ad me suauissimas Gaspa-
rini pergamentis epistolae, nō a te modo
diligentē emēdatas: sed a tuis quoq̃ ger-
manis impressoribus nitide & terse trā-
scriptas. Magnam tibi gratiā gasparinus

Ulrich Gering, Paris, 1470. From his edition of Gasparinus.

The first printer in Paris, Ulrich Gering, was almost as unsuccessful as his German brothers in the art had been at Rome. His idea of a proper form of Roman letter is shown in this fac-simile of his types in 1470. This is not

a good form. It does not surprise us to learn that this face of type was only acceptable, barely so, to the scholars of the university whose printer he was, and that, in all books for popular use, he was obliged to make use of the Round Gothic.

The first really good form was made by Nicholas Jenson at Venice, and shown for the first time in his edition of

Printed from
1470 to 1482.

**E VSEBIVM Pamphili de euangelica præparatione
latinum ex græco beatissime pater iussu tuo effeci .
Nam quom eum uirum tum eloquétia: tū multarū
rerum peritia: et īgeni mirabili flumine ex his quæ
iam traducta sunt præstātissimum sanctitas tua iu-
dicet: atq; ideo quæcūq; apud græcos ipsius opera
extēt latina facere īstituerit: euangelicā præparationē
quæ in urbe forte reperta est: primum aggressi tra-**

Nicholas Jenson, Venice, 1470. From his edition of Eusebius.

Eusebius, in 1470. Compared with modern letter it may seem rude and coarse, but the simplicity and beauty of his design can be perceived by the expert, even where his lines have been partially obscured by thick presswork and imperfect copying. One cannot fail to note the improved roundness and clearness and even lining of his letter, and its general symmetry in the combinations of composition. Jenson gave to Venice a reputation for typography which

Superiority of
Jenson's form
of Roman.

The types of
Venice pre-
ferred.

it enjoyed for many years after his death. Printers in Lyons, Paris, and in Flanders knew that they would best commend their books to literary men by their announcements, frequently made, that the types they used were "the true Venetian characters."

It cannot be said that Jenson invented the Roman character, but his models were adopted everywhere, to the suppression of all rival forms. We shall see that Jenson's forms were afterward changed and too often perverted, but the improved taste of our day shows an inclination to revert to many of his peculiarities.

Roman type
disliked by
uneducated
readers.

The superior merit of the Roman character was not, at first, conceded by printers and readers. Accepted by educated men everywhere, it was disliked and rejected by common people who were just beginning to buy books. Printers who were well supplied with fonts of Black Letter intensified the prejudices of the readers by their absurd commendations of the Black Letter. It was a "sublime letter," the "most beautiful form," "unquestionably superior to all other styles." Black Letter books found buyers in Italy, long after the introduction of Roman types. Even Jenson found it necessary to print popular books in Gothic letters. The most beautiful books printed in Paris, the Books of Hours, from the presses of Pigouchet and Kerver, are all in the most pointed form of Gothic character. The first books of the Netherlands, and of England, were in pointed letters.

In Germany the dislike of Roman forms was inveterate. The printers of the Strasburg classics in Roman type found that their editions were neglected. Not even the authority and example of Albert Durer, who preferred the Roman form, could make that character popular. Obligated to lighten and make less somber the old monastic Gothic, the German printers retained all its angularity and even added to its bristling rows of ornaments and flourishes.

Roman not
accepted in
Germany.

Religious prejudices had a good deal to do with the old dislike. A book of devotion, to be orthodox, must be in pointed letters. A book in Roman type savored of heresy. The free-thinking scholars and philosophers of Italy were suspected of heathenism when they tried to restore the letters and literature of old Rome. Every book in the Roman character was an object to be mistrusted. Nor was the objection confined to Roman letter or literature. The early printers of Paris encountered active hostility from the ecclesiastical authorities of that city when they printed books in Greek or Hebrew.

Regarded as
a heterodox
character.

Roman types were occasionally used in England by Richard Pynson, but the first book¹ printed in England

¹ These Roman types were probably made in France. The first distinct mention I find of the making in England of Roman types is in a letter of Archbishop Parker to Lord Burghley, Dec. 13, 1572: "To the better accomplishment of this worke, and other that shall followe, I have spoken to Daie the printer to cast a new Italian letter which he is doinge, and it will cost him xl marks; and loth he and other printers be to printe any latten booke, because they will not heare be uttered, and for that Bookes printed in Englande be in suspition abroad." *Timperley's Encyclopædia*, p. 381.

In 1521.

Isaac Taylor,
The Alphabet,
vol. II. p. 184.

entirely with the Roman letter, was the Treatise by Henry VIII., on account of which the Pope bestowed on him the title of Defender of the Faith. It was probably in deference to the Italian taste that Roman types were obtained for a book intended as a compliment to the Pope.

IV

Early Italic Types.



At the beginning of the xvth century, the reading world was practically divided in two classes: those who favored Roman; those who favored Black Letter. An eminent printer of Venice, Aldus Manutius, thought the time was favorable for a new form of printing type. He selected a fashion of writing, then known as Cursivetos or Cancellarius, and in high favor with copyists. The body marks were thin and the letters condensed; in every feature more simple than the Gothic. It was very compact, warranting the belief that, with this letter, he could print a text in octavo which had before been done in quarto. Possibly emulation was another motive. Jenson had earned great honor

Aldus born in
1450. Printed
from 1494 to
1515.

F allere et incultos aris aduvertere crines.
 S alicet heu superi. cum tu cludare minaci
 C asside ferratusq; sones ego diuitis aurum
 H armoniæ dotale geram? dabit aptior ista
 F ors deus argolicasq; habitu præstabo maritas.
 C um regis coniux, cum te mihi sospite templa
 V otuiis implenda chorus. nunc induat illa.
 Q uæ petit, et bellante potest gaudere marito.
 S ic eriphylæos aurum fatale penates
 I rripit. scelerumq; ingentia semina mouit.
 E t graue Tisiphone risit gauisa futuris.
 T ænaris hic celsus equis. quam dispare coetus
 C yllarus, ignaro generarat Castore prolem.
 Q uassat humum. natem cultu parnasia monstrant
 V ella. frondenti crinitur cassis olina.
 A lbaq; puniceas interplicat infula cristas.
 A rma simul, prensasq; iugo moderatur habenas.
 H inc, atq; inde moræ iaculis, et ferrea currus
 S ylua tremit. procul ipse graui metuendus in hasta
 E minet. et clypeo victum Pythona coruscat.
 H uius apollinæ currum comitantur Amyclæ.
 Q uos Pylas, et dubijs Malæa uitata carinis,
 P laudentiq; habiles Cariæ resonare Dianæ,
 Q uos Pharis, uoluerumq; parens cythereia Messæ,
 T aygetiq; phalanx et oliuiferi Eurotæ
 D ira manus. deus ipse viros in puluere crude
 A rcas alit. nudæq; modos uirtutis, et iras
 I ngenerat. vigor inde animis, et mortis honoræ
 D ulce sacrum. gaudent natorum in fata parentes.
 H ortanturq; mori. deflet iamq; omnis ephœbum

First book
in Italic.

by his cut of Roman types: why should not Aldus be as fortunate? Selecting for his model a very neat manuscript of Petrarch, he had punches cut for it by a distinguished goldsmith, Francesco Raibolini. The types so made were first shown in an edition of Virgil, 1501, and the new face was much admired. The senate of Venice and three popes of Rome gave him a patent for its exclusive use. This illustration of Aldus's Italic is a fac-simile from his edition of Statius, printed by him in 1502 while the types were still unworn. As every copy must be, this is inferior to the original. There is a lack of sharpness about the lines, but the thickening of line is not greater than that of over-inked pages in the original.

Peculiarities
of first form.

It differs from our forms of Italic in many points. The ascending and descending letters are unusually long; the inclination of the letter is very slight; double or conjoined letters and different forms of the same letter are common. But the most noticeable peculiarity is the small upright form of capital letters, spaced off, and standing apart from the text. The incongruity of upright with inclined letters did not trouble Aldus. Like Caxton, he did "but follow his copy," for this method of separating capitals was then an established mannerism with Italian copyists. Aldus had great reverence for classic forms, and probably thought that it would have been as great an offense to alter the forms of Roman capitals, by giving them inclination, as it would be to alter or change the words of the text.

See fac-simile
of an Italian
MS. (plate
27) in Hum-
phreys' Hist.
of Printing.

Aldus never seriously changed these letters, but his son did,—not, however, to their improvement. It is difficult for a modern reader, who sees things with his own eyes, and not through the spectacles of others, to perceive the remarkable beauty which has been attributed to the son's improved Italic. Intending to make the letter firmer and bolder, the younger Aldus made it blacker but more obscure. Aldus's patent was not respected. The rival printing house of the Giunta made an imitation: so did printers at Lyons, who not only copied his patented types, but printed from them spurious editions of Aldus's best books.

The Italic of
Paul Manutius.

The Giunta
began to print
at Venice in
1489.

*Explicit felater Anno dñi MCCCCXI
Die nona Mensis Septembris Expensis honesti
virii Bartholomei trot.*

The imprint of a counterfeiter, the "honest man, Bartholomew Trot."

Aldus intended that this Italic should be used as a text letter, and it was so used by himself and his successors for many years. But Italic never succeeded in getting popularity in Germany. It did not supplant Black Letter; it did not prevent a freer use of the Roman. In France it was more successful. Geofroy Tory, who had recently returned from Rome full of admiration for Italian art, published at Paris, in 1510, an edition of Quintilian, in which he praised the new letter as the most beautiful of types. Other printers used it as a text letter, but it did not stay in fashion long. The Roman face of Jenson was

Not successful
as a text type.

Diminished
use of Italic.

more readable and was preferred. In time Italic was assigned its present office as a display letter for Roman, of which it is now the indispensable complement. Yet its use is diminishing. One hundred years ago a font of text type was made up of about nine-tenths Roman and one-tenth Italic. The apportionment made by type-founders of our time allows but about one-twentieth of Italic.

Capitals in-
clined by
French type
founders.

Granjon of Lyons, as well as Tory of Paris, gave to the capitals of their Italic the same inclination as to the small letters, but Tory's pupil, Claude Garamond, thought

*I CARE NOTHING FOR THE WHITE
ELZEVIR PAPER, NOR THE BEAUTIFUL
IMPRESSION. I SEE ONLY A PETTY TYPE
ON A NIGGARDLY PAGE. LE FEURE.*

A modern imitation of the old Swash letters.

it desirable in some capitals to fill up the vacant spaces made by this inclination, which he did by protracting and curving lines. These characters were then known among English printers as Swash letters.





THE brief popularity which Italic had as a text letter seems to have provoked the founders of Lyons to emulation. One of the number, Nicholas Granjon, made himself famous in all printing houses by the novelty of his designs and the merit of his punch-cutting. The "Cursive François," or "Civilité," as it was then called, of which an illustration is given on the next page, was made by him in 1556, in imitation of the polite style of penmanship then in fashion.

Fournier,
tome II, p. 265

Many books were printed entirely in this almost unreadable letter. Despite its obscurity we have to admire the dash and swing of the capital letters. Plantin, of Antwerp, printed many books in this style of type with initials of wonderful eccentricity. The quaintness of this style induced a publisher of Paris, a few years ago, to have the matrices of this type hunted out of some cellar of Lyons where they had lain disused for nearly two hundred years, and to have a font recast, which he now uses as a fit letter for prefaces. I have a little font of this casting, from which this illustration is taken.

Born c. 1485.
Died c. 1554.

Type-founding, as a distinct art, seems to have been made, unconsciously perhaps, by Geofroy Tory, of Paris, a true artist after the fashion of the xvth century,—in other

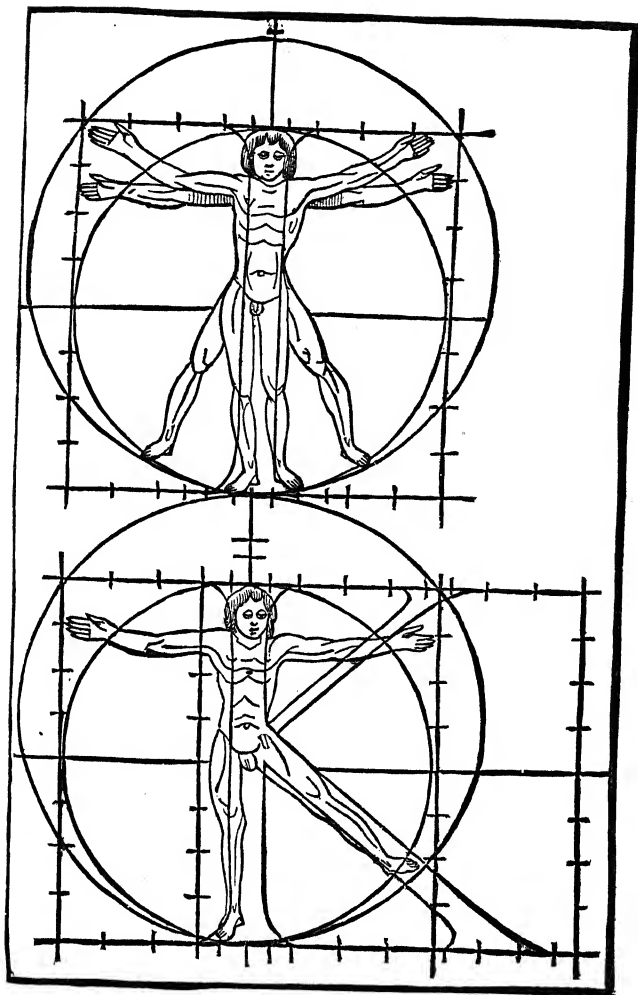
Sçai-tu, Maitre Oslandin, dison— Dame Sironde
à son mari, que Sire Chiboulc est devenu fou?
Quoi? le Seigneur du Chateau? Oui, Vrai-
mem—: Alexx, son Page, l'a conduit ici hier
au soir, lorsque tu étois à la Ville. Notre
Maitre, me dit-il (en secret) a l'esprn grande-
ment deuant, il nous faut en giste promptem-
Je lui ai donné celui de notre fauchette et ma
chambre à Alexx. Ce secret est bon à garder,
dit Oslandin à Dame Sironde. Ecc fournicr

The Cursive François of Granjon of Lyons

words, a master of many arts, an engraver on wood, a painter, a designer of letters, and a professor in the university. In 1526 he began to print a book entitled *Champ Fleuri*,¹ in which he undertook to reform French orthog-

¹ Champ Fleury, auquel est contenu
Lart et Science de la deue et vraye
Proportion des Lettres Attiques, quon
dit autrement Lettres Antiques, et

vulgairement Lettres Romaines, pro-
portionnees selon le Corps et Visage
humain. Ce Livre est privilege pour
Dix Ans Par le Roy., etc. Paris, 1529.



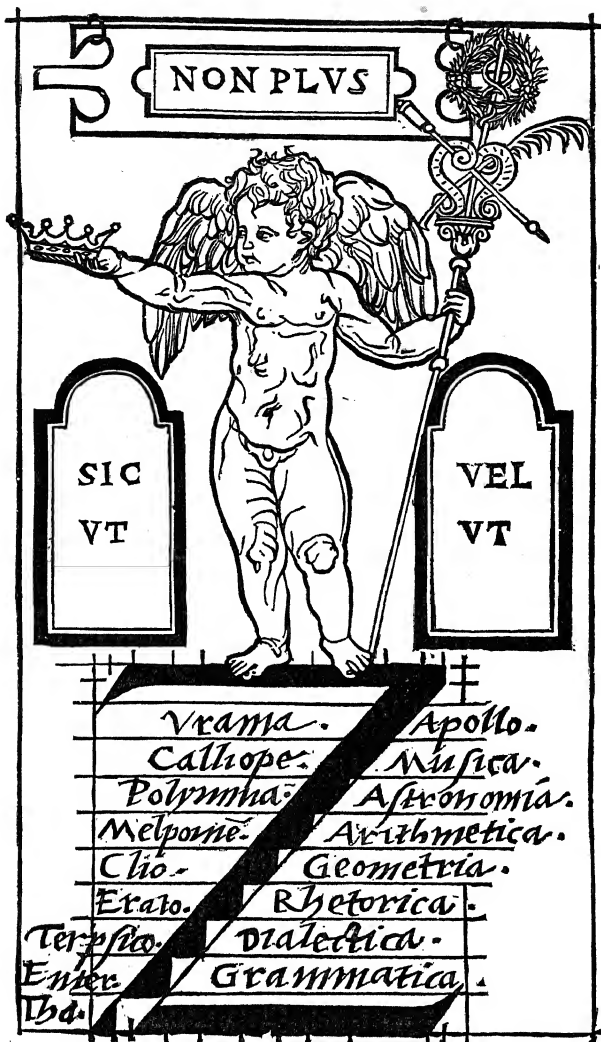
Geoffroy Tory's method of forming the letters I and K.

Tory's rules
for making
types.

Aug. Bernard,
Geofroy Tory,
pp. 46, 47.

raphy and typography. Some of the speculations in this book are fantastic even beyond the lawless conceits of his age. He traced the derivation of all forms of the alphabetical letters to the two letters which make the name of the mythological goddess IO. From this straight line and circle came all letters. He made the human figure fit into a geometrical diagram on which he planned the shapes of letters. To make letters of true proportion, he recommended that the square be subdivided with many perpendicular and horizontal lines. Upon these subdivided little squares, with rule and compass, and aided by rules which he gives, one may determine the proper shape of every letter. What use he made of this system cannot now be determined, but his book found admiring readers, for it was reprinted and is respectfully mentioned by modern French authors as a valuable contribution to literature. Not without reason. Tory made rules for the use of the accents, the apostrophe, and the cedilla of the French language. He reformed its orthography. It is largely to his teachings that the Black Letter was gradually discarded. That he was a good artist and a skillful designer of letters may be inferred from the illustrations of his book. He drew letters and initials for Henry Stephens, and probably for other eminent printers of Paris.

The patronage given to typography by Francis I. of France, was the beginning of a great printing house, which, under the names of Royal, National, or Imperial,



Geofroy Tory's method of forming the letter Z.

has survived all changes in the French Government. In this school of typography many of the able punch-cutters of France were educated or developed. One of the most eminent was Claude Garamond, who has ever since been known in France as "the father of type-founders." He seems to have been the first type-founder for the trade, not only designing, but cutting and casting types of all kinds to the order of printers. His reputation as a designer of types was established at least as early as 1535. At the order of Francis I. he engraved, in 1544, the three kinds of characters which Robert Stephens required for his Greek texts. To him succeeded many able men, who for more than a hundred years maintained the fame of France as the leader in typography.

Guillaume Le Bé, equally honored as a designer of letters and founder of types, was a pupil of Claude Garamond and of Robert Stephens, for whom he perfected the Hebrew types which Stephens used. In 1561 he was firmly established at Paris, and his type-foundry was the most celebrated in the world. At the request of Philip II., he made the Oriental types for the great Antwerp Polyglot, completed 1573, by Plantin, in eight volumes, folio. He was also called to Venice to cut Hebrew types. His son, Henri Guillaume, was printer as well as engraver. The son and grandson of Henri kept up the reputation of the house.

Jacques de Sanlecque was a pupil of Le Bé, and was notable for his Roman type. He was also eminent for his

Died 1561.

Born 1525.
Died 1598.

Born 1570

Born 1573.
Died 1648.

music types, and for the Oriental types he made for Le Jay's Polyglot Bible. His foundry was maintained by descendants for four generations.

Pierre Moreau, who began his work in 1640, Jean Cot (began 1670), and Pierre Esclassant (began 1666) were also noteworthy as type-founders, but they made no changes in Roman letters. In all French type-foundries, the punch-cutters had most to do in making types for foreign languages. The modern investigator is astonished at the number and merit of the many faces of Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Turkish, and Orientals made during the xvith and xviiith centuries, many of them coming from petty or little-known French foundries. In this field Dutch foundries were the only competitors, for type-founding in Italy and Germany had declined as rapidly as it began, and English type-foundries were then of no importance.

The "King's Roman" (*Romain du roi*) is one of the historical types of France. In 1693, Louis xiv., wishing to establish a printing-office in the Louvre, and to do it in a royal way, requested the Academy of Sciences to aid him in his undertaking. M. Jaugeon, a member of that body, was instructed by the society to devise letters of faultless form, and to make characteristic and original faces for the royal office. He seems to have studied *Champ Fleuri* to purpose, for in time he published a series of engraved plates, full of geometrical figures, in which he showed the fruit of his teaching

Fournier,
tome II, p.
xxvi. et seq.

Ibid, tome II,
p. xx.

The notions of
M. Jaugeon.

and of his thinking. He went beyond his master. Tory required about one hundred squares for the framework of a letter, but Jaugeon needed 2304 squares for every full-bodied Roman capital. Italic letters were to be constructed with as many rhomboids and parallelograms. On the squares for the Roman letter eight full circles must be drawn to make an A, and eleven to make a G. The system was undoubtedly scientific, but the practical punch-cutter of the royal printing-office refused to make use of it, doubting his ability to draw so many circles and squares in the area given to small book types. He stopped at the first rule of M. Jaugeon, "Consult the eyes as sovereign judges of form," and cut by eye more than by rule.

Although the rules of Jaugeon were rejected, one of his proposed mannerisms was accepted by French founders. This mannerism was the displacement of the stubby, triangular serif at the ends of unconnected body-marks and the substitution of a flat unbracketed hair line, as will be shown in this comparison of three styles.



Bracketed Serif of the
Modern Scotch-face.

Flat Serif of the
King's Roman.

Stubby Serif
of Garamond.

This change may seem a small matter, but it seriously obscured the appearance of types. It compelled type-

His geometri-
cal system.

Fournier,
tome I, p. xix.
note.

founders to be more exact in lining their letters, but it made every line seem as if it had been ruled. This appearance of ruling dazzled the eyes and obscured the character.

Not a wise change.

H —Serif.

—Body-mark.

H

Hair Line.

f

Kerned letter.

l

Thin letter.

w

Fat letter.

j

Full-bodied letter.

m

Short letter.

y

Descending letter.

d

Ascending letter.

The flat serif weakened the strength and legibility of Roman types; its only merit was in the direction of lightness and delicacy. Upon poetry and leaded work this delicacy may have been a satisfactory change; for solid type and for sober books, in which legibility should be the first consideration, the flat hair-line serif was a mischievous invention. For the flat serifs soon thickened or broke off under wear, leaving the body marks "on their stumps." When types in this condition were badly printed, as they often were, on poor paper with weak ink, the print therefrom was almost unreadable. The bad printing of the xviii century is largely due to this innovation.

Made types weak and obscure.

VI

Dutch Types of the xvith and xviii Centuries.



ONE of the most notable of early Dutch founders was Christopher Van Dijck, "the great master of his time and of our own," as was truly said of him by the widow of Daniel Elzevir.

Although one of the ablest, he has been one of the least known of type-founders. What is worse, his types are now known and described as the Elzevir types, or xviii century types. His individuality seems to have been merged into that of one of the Elzevirs, of whose type-foundry he was the manager and punch-cutter. Moxon was the first English writer who discovered his merits, and he writes about him enthusiastically, introducing the subject with some quaint remarks on taste in letter-designing which deserve preservation:

I confess this piece of judgment, viz. knowing of true Shape, may admit of some controversy, because neither the Ancients whom we received the knowledge of these *Letters* from, nor any other authentick Authority have delivered us Rules, either to make or know true shape

by: And therefore it may be objected that every one that makes *Letters* but tolerably like *Romain*, *Italick*, etc. may pretend his to be true shap'd.

To this I answer, that though we can plead no Ancient Authority for the shape of *Letters*, yet doubtless

Types of C.
Van Dijck.

Mechanick
Exercises,
pp. 14-16.

(if we judge rationally) we must conclude that the *Romain Letters* were Originally invented and contrived to be made and consist of Circles, Arches of Circles, and straight Lines; and therefore those *Letters* that have these Figures, either entire, or else properly mixt, so as the Course and Progress of the Pen may best admit, may deserve the name of true Shape, rather than those that have not. Besides, Since the late made *Dutch Letters* are so generally, and indeed most deservedly accounted the best, as for their Shape, consisting so exactly of Mathematical Regular Figures as aforesaid, And for the commodious Fatness they have beyond other *Letters*, which easing the Eyes in Reading, renders them more Legible; As also the true placing their Fats and their Leans, with the sweet driving them into one another, and indeed all the accomplishments that can render *Letter* regular and beautiful, do more visibly appear in them than in any *Letters* Cut by any other People: And therefore I think we may account the Rules they were made by, to be the Rules of true shap'd *Letters*.

For my own part, I liked their *Letters* so well, especially those that were Cut by *Christophel Van Dijck* of *Amsterdam*, that I set my self to examine the Proportions of all and every the parts and Members of

every *Letter*, and was so well pleased with the Harmony and Decorum of their Symetrie, and found so much Regularity in every part, and so good reason for his Order and Method, that I examined the biggest of his *Letters* with Glasses, which so magnified the whole *Letter*, that I could easily distinguish, and with small Deviders measure off the size, scituation and form of every part, and the proportion every part bore to the whole; and for my own future satisfaction collected my Observations into a Book, which I have inserted in my *Exercises on Letter-Cutting*. For therein I have exhibited to the World the true Shape of *Christophel Van Dijck's* aforesaid *Letters*, largely Engraven in Copper Plates.

Whence I conclude, That since common consent of Book-men assign the Garland to the *Dutch-Letters* as of late *Cut*, and that now those Letters are reduced unto a Rule, I think the Objection is Answered; And our Master-Printers care in the choice of good and true shap'd *Letters* is no difficult Task: For if it be a large Bodied *Letter*, as *English*, *Great-Primer* and upwards, it will shew itself; and if it be small, as *Pearl*, *Nomparel*, etc. though it may be difficult to judge the exact Symetry with the naked Eye, yet by the help of a Magnifying-Glass, or two

if occasion be, even those small *Letters* will appear as large as the biggest Bodied *Letters* shall to the naked Eye: And then it will be no difficult Task to judge of the Order and Decorum even of the smallest Bodied *Letters*. For indeed, to my wonder and astonishment, I have observ'd *V. Dijcks Pearl Dutch Letters* in Glasses that have Magnified them to great *Letters*, and found

the whole Shape bear such true proportion to his great *Letters*, both for the *Thickness, Shape, Fats and Leans*, as if with Compasses he could have measur'd and set off in that small compass every particular Member, and the true breadth of every *Fat*, and *Lean Streak* in each *Letter*, not to exceed or want (when magnified) of *Letter Cut* to the *Body* it was Magnified to.

Commended
by Willems.

Alphonse Willems, the annalist of the Elzevirs, is even more emphatic in his praise of Van Dijck's types.¹

After reading these eulogies the reader will probably be disappointed when he examines the fac-simile shown by Willems of the specimen sheet of Van Dijck's types which the widow of Daniel Elzevir sent to Moretus, then the owner of the Plantin printing-house. The fac-simile, although fairly made, does not fully show the merits of the

Les Elzevier,
p. lxxix.

1 "All who seek and value the master-pieces that came from the Elzevir press have often asked the name of the artist who designed and engraved the types, the outlines of which are so delicate, the proportions so fine, and the spacing so intelligently arranged,—all of them features which give to the Elzevir editions the seal of the master, and which put them altogether beyond comparison. Surely the man who designed this beautiful type—so perfect in its style that the phrase *Elzevirian*, by which it is known, has become in bibliographic language the synonym of

perfection—was not an ordinary artist, and deserved, not less than the Elzevirs themselves, that his name should go down to posterity. * * *

"The name, formerly unknown, of Christopher Van Dijck is now attached to the history of printing, and will add itself to the glorious line of artists of all kinds which the inhabitants of the Netherlands are proud of. If France mentions with pride the name of Claude Garamond and the Sanlecques, Holland can be proud, too, in possessing a master scarcely inferior to the first, and surely surpassing the two others."

STATVS

DIVO SEVERO PIO.

COLONIA VLPIA TRAIANA AVG.
DACIÆ ZARMIS.*Aliud Epigramma.*

I. O. M.

ROMVLO PARENTI, MARTI AV-
XILLIATORI, FOELICIBVS AVSP-
CIIIS CÆSARIS DIVI NERVÆ TRA-
IANI AVGVSTI, CONDITA COLO-
NIA DACIA ZARMIS, PER M. SCAV-
RIANVM EIVS PRO P. R.Sunt præterea in ea provincia montes
auri & argenti ditissimi, utpote Abrug-
bania, Zalathnia, & Keresbania, ex qui-
bus magna vis auri & argenti sumitur,
& Cameræ Regiæ pro cudendis tam au-
reis quam argenteis monetis applicatur.Abrugbania dives auri oppidum, in
cujus circuitu montes mira rerum om-
nium fertilitate, usque adeo cumulari, ut
Yoleris terræ viscibus, & thesauros Re-
giis opibus non indignoscat: nempe illi-
cobritum aurum parulis de montium
verticibus frustularum præciditur, subter
quorum valles vitæ & perlucidi amnes
decun-

Van Dijk types. Liberal allow-
ance should be made for the worn
types and the bad printing¹ of the
original specimen sheet, as well as
for some falling-off, even from this
low standard, in a fac-simile made
by the process of photo-engraving.
Yet the good form and fitting-up
of the Flemish Black Letters are
but slightly obscured in the fine
fac-simile of Willems: any punch-
cutter might be justly proud of
them. The smaller sizes of Roman
and Italic make a creditable ap-
pearance, but all of the larger sizes
are not so good: some are really
bad. Letters more uncouth than
those of the capitals of the body
“Dubbeld Augustijn Kapitalen,”

Fac-similes
not entirely
satisfactory.

A page from an Elzevir duodecimo.

¹ Bad printing was as common in the
xviith as in the xixth century. Blades,
writing about the old Dutch types of
the Enschedé foundry, says: “It is
difficult even for a printer to believe
that the types in the old [Enschedé
specimen book of 1757] and the new
[of 1870] are from the same matrices.
In the old specimen books, the casting
seems faulty, the fine strokes of the
letters are often wanting, and the face

has become so encrusted at the edges
with hard ink that the true shape is
completely concealed. This is espe-
cially visible in the large types; but in
the 1870 specimens, modern skill and
careful working have done for them
their best. It would not be improbable
that were the great Fleischman himself
to see the result, he would not recognize
the types of his own cutting, as now
printed.” *Book-worm*, April, 1870.

Blades on the
printing of
the xviiith
century.

Kleene Kanon Cursif.

*Margaritam in Imperii
cura Sublevabat. Hollan-
dis, Zelandisque atque in
Burgundis Præfectu Desi*

Ascendonica Romeyn.

Quod quisque in ano est, sci
unt. Sciunt Id qui in Aurum
Rex reginæ dixerit : Sciunt
quod Juno; Neque & futura
in Æ ABCDEFGHIKLMN
OPRSTVWXUY Σ Ϡ ϡ *
([\$ † ? † e , ABCDEFGHIKLMNO

Dubbelde Augustijn Kapitalen.

ABCDEFGHIK
LMNOPQTRU
JVWXYZÆ, J ;

A part of Willems's fac-simile of the large specimen sheet of Van Dijck types.

of which a fac-simile is shown on the preceding page, were probably never shown by any reputable type-founder.¹

Moxon's tracings of the Van Dijk Roman letter, although rudely done, showing undue sharpening of the lower serifs, give a clearer idea of its peculiarities of style and of its

M. T. C. T. TITIO TITI F. LEGATO S. D.

E Tfi non dubito quin apud te mea commendatio prima satis valeat, tamen obsequor homini familiarissimo, C. Aviano Flacco : cujus causa omnia cum cupitum mehercule etiam debeo. De quo & praesens tecum egi diligenter, cum tu mihi humanissime respondisti, & scripsi ad te accurate antea : sed putat interesse sua, me ad te quam saepissime scribere. Quare velim mihi ignoscas, si illius voluntati obtemperans, minus videbor meminisse constantiae tuae. A te idem illud peto, ut de loco, quo deportet frumentum, & de tempore, Aviano commodos : quorum utrumque per eundem me obtinuit triennium, dum Pompeius isti negotio praefuit. Summa est, in quo mihi gratissimum facere possis, si curaris ut Avianus, quum se a me amari putat, me a te amari sciat. Erit id mihi pergratum. Vale.

Fac-simile of types used by Daniel Elzevir.

M. T. VIII
Ciceronis
Epistolarum,
tomus II. p. 343.
Amsterdam,
1876.

real merit than can be had from the study of the Elzevir specimen sheet. The general effect of this letter is shown to the best advantage in the larger types of some of the

¹ The widow of Daniel Elzevir has said that these types were by Van Dijk, but it is possible that she may have been deceived. She begins her letter (see page 47) with the admis-

sion that she could not direct all the work that had been done by her husband. In other words, she was not an expert in typography, and did but repeat what she had been told.

octavos of Daniel Elzevir. The smaller types of the duodecimos are too small to clearly show the peculiarities of cut.

Van Dijck seems to have designed letters with intent to have them resist the wear of the press. The body-marks were firm, and the counters of good width, not easily choked with ink. Hair lines were few and of positive thickness. The serifs were not noticeably short, but they were stubby, or so fairly bracketed to the body-mark that they could not be readily gapped or broken down. When printed, as much of the Elzevir printing was done, with strong impression and abundance of ink, the types were almost as bold and black as the style now known as Old Style Antique. This firmness of face explains the popularity of the so-called Elzevir letter. It may not be comely, but it is legible. The letters may be stubby, but they have no useless lines; they were not made to show the punch-cutter's skill in truthful curves and slender lines, but to be read easily and to wear well. Yet to readers whose standard of taste is the delicacy of copper-plate engraving, the Elzevir types are, as Hansard calls them, types of "awkward stiffness."

The fickleness of popular taste is illustrated by the fate of the Van Dijck punches, which were last owned by the founders Enschedé. Before the year 1770 all the Van Dijck letters were out of fashion. Michael Fleischman, a German punch-cutter then in the employ of the Enschedés, undertook to renew the types of their foundry, which he did by sending all the Van Dijck punches and

Merits of the
Van Dijck
types.

Typographia,
p. 618.

Amsterdam, den 3 Januarij 1681.

Mevrouw:

Wesende te rade geworden om mijne schrift gieterije te verkopen, also ick mijselve niet bequaem oordeele alles te beheeren, bestaet uyt 27 soorten van stempels en bij 50 soorten van matrijsen, en gemaekt wesende bij Cbristoffel van Dijck, de beste meester van sijnen en onsen tijdt, en bij gevolge de beroemste gieterije, die ooyt is geweest, so hebbe zulks UE. wel willen bekent maken, en de proeven en catalogus daervan senden, op dat UE. genegentbeyt tot deselve hebbende UE. tijdt kan waernemen, en profijt doen.

Letter sent by the widow of Daniel Elzevir to the widow of Moretus.

Willems, Les Elzevier, p. lxxxii.

Waarmede blijve

Mevrouw

UEd

Pro de weduwe van Dan. Elsevier.

Amsterdam, January 3, 1681.

Madame:

Not believing that I am competent to manage everything, I have decided to sell my type-foundry. It consists of 27 suites of punches and 50 suites of matrices, which are the work of Christopher Van Dijck, the best master of his time, and of our own. This foundry is, consequently, the most famous ever made. I wish to inform you of the intended sale, and to send you the specimens and the catalogue, so that, if so disposed, you can seize the occasion, and profit by it.

Translation.

I am, madame,

Yours, etc.,

for the widow of Daniel Elsevier.

Imitation of Italic types used by John Elzevir at Leyden in 1659.

From the foundry of Gustave Mayeur, Paris.

Destruction of
the Van Dijk
types.

matrices to the cellar, and by cutting entirely new punches in imitation of the prevailing styles of the leading French founders. The new faces had the merit of novelty and pleased the type-buyers of England and Holland for many years. About 1810, one of the descendants of the Enschedé family, annoyed by the sight of punches and matrices which seemed of no use, ordered all of them to be broken up and destroyed. Sixty years after, Willems vigorously rebuked the bad taste which prompted this wanton act of vandalism. Founders in Holland and Belgium discovered when too late that there was a good deal of merit in the destroyed types, and men of letters everywhere called for the reproduction of the entire series.

Other Dutch
founders.

In the brief time allowed me I can say but little of other Dutch founders. Dirck Voskens was a celebrated founder at Amsterdam. Athias of the same city maintained a high reputation for his "Jewish foundry" as it was then called. Isaac Van der Putte of Amsterdam deserves as honorable mention. There were other foundries in the xviiith century at the Hague, at Leyden, at Antwerp, and at Haarlem.

Rudolph Wetstein, a printer of Amsterdam, inherited from three generations of founders at Basle and Geneva the materials of a great foundry which he reëstablished at Haarlem, and which in time passed into the hands of the Enschedé family. The Enschedé foundry is still in existence, and eminent for its good cuts of Orientals.

AD DANIELEM ELZEVIUM, BIBLIOPOLAM AMSTELODAMENSEM.

Ecquidnam video? O Dei Deæque!
 Nostros scilicet Elzevirianis
 Excusos video typis libellos.
 O typos nitidos & elegantes!
 O comptum & lepidum novum volumen!
 Atro literulæ picem colore,
 Et candore nives papyrus æquat.
 Codex sindone non quotidiana,
 Et membrana nitet novo umbilico.
 Fulget pagina cuncta purpurisso,
 Et sunt omnia pumice expolita.
 Tam comptum & lepidum novum
 volumen
 Invitos trahit & tenet legentes;
 Et, quas non habuere, dant habere
 Typi versiculis amœnitates.

Sic nuptæ, invida Fata quos negarunt,
 Ornatrix tribuit novos lepores.

At, ô dulce decus meum, Elzeviri,
 Præstantissime quot fuere, quot sunt,
 Typorum pater elegantiorum,
 Ecquid, dic mihi, dic, venuste noster,
 Hoc pro munere, muneris reponam?
 Quas possum tibi gratias referre?
 Sic semper lepidos tuos libellos
 Facundus probet & requirat orbis.
 Sic vestras adeat frequens tabernas
 Emptor. Sic decus Elzevirianum,
 Doctorum volitans per ora vatum,
 Terras impleat, impleatque cœlum.
 Turnebos simul atque Vascosanos,
 Et vincas Stephanos, Manutiosque.

TO DANIEL ELZEVR, BIBLIOPOLE AT AMSTERDAM.

O ye gods and goddesses! what do I see? My verses reproduced by the Elzevir types! O types elegant and exquisite! O gracious and charming volume! The dainty types are as black as pitch; the paper is as white as snow. * * * * So gayly attired, the book attracts and retains the reader in spite of himself. The types give charms to my verses which they never had before: like the bride to whom a skillful hair-dresser gives the graces that a jealous fate has denied.

But thou, Elzevir, my sweet ennobler! thou, the father of types of incomparable elegance, thou, I say it again, most amiable of friends! what can I offer thee in return for such a gift? How can I acquit myself of this debt? May men of letters forever prize and collect thy bewitching books! May crowds of buyers be steadily pressing forward to thy store! May the name of Elzevir, transmitted from age to age by the songs of poets, fill the great globe, and fill the heavens. Mayst thou vanquish Turnebus and Vascosan; surpass the Stephens and the Alduses.

GILLES MÉNAGE.

Imitation of Roman Types used by John Elzevir at Leyden in 1659.
 From the foundry of Gustave Mayeur, Paris.

Types of
Plantin.

The types of the Plantin foundry were not exclusively Flemish. His Roman types by Flemish designers have no local or national features. As a Frenchman, his tastes inclined to the French designers Granjon and Le Bé. He also had some fonts cut in Germany.

VII

English Black Letter.



ENGLISH printing, unlike that of France, Italy, or Germany, began with a book in its own vernacular; but its first book, the "Recuyell of the Histories of Troy," was printed not in England, but in the Netherlands, by William Caxton, about 1474. The types of this book, as well as of the second, "The Game and Playe of the Chesse," also by Caxton, are unlike the usual English form of Black Letter. They closely resemble the types used by John Brito, of Bruges, in 1481, of which a fac-simile is appended. Resemblance may also be traced in comparing these types with those attributed to Colard Mansion, another printer of Bruges. Whether Caxton made the types he afterward used in England, or had them made in the Netherlands, is not positively known, but he always preferred the Flemish form of letters.

Types of
Caxton.

See page 51.

The printers who followed Caxton — Wynkyn de Worde, Richard Pynson, and William Faques—were of French birth

Aspice presentis scripture grada que sit
 Confer opus opere. spectetur codice coTex
 Respice ꝑ munde. ꝑ terse. ꝑqz & ore
 Imprimut hec ciuis brugesis Brito Johānes
 Inueniēs artem nullo monstrāte mirādam
 Instrumēta quoqz non minus lau & stupēda

Types of
 John Brito.

Types of John Brito, Bruges, 1481.

and inheritors of French tastes. The form of letters which they used closely resemble the Black Letter types of printers at Paris and Rouen, in which cities books of devotion

q Want Je regarde et congnois les oppini-
 ons des hommes nourris en aucunes fin-
 guieres histoires de troyes / Et voy et
 regarde aussi. que de Jcelle faire vng re-
 cueil Je Indigne ay receu le commandes-
 ment de tres noble et tres Vtueux prince
 Philippe par la grace faiseur de toutes

Early form of
 Flemish type.

Fac-simile of the types of the first edition of "Recueil des Histoires de Troye," printed before Caxton's edition in English.

were largely printed to be sold on English soil. The laws of England were then officially printed in French, and

Types used by
Caxton in 1477.

The Dictes and Sayinges of Philosophres.
Which Boke is translated out of Frenshe into
Englysh by the Noble and puisant lord
Antoine Erle of Ryuyers lord of Scales
and of the Isle of Wyght. Defendour and
directour of the siege Apostolique. etc. Em:
prynted by me William Caxton at Westmin:
stre the year of our lord m. cccc. lxxvij.

Specimen of the types used by Caxton in 1477.

These types were cut by Vincent Figgins, of London, in 1855, and used by him in a
fac-simile edition of "The Game and Playe of the Chesse."

French was still the language of its court and its cultivated
society. It is not surprising that the French printers of
England should join with English readers in a preference

Types of some
early English
prayer-books.

Of the Craft of Poynting. Therbe five maner
Pontys, and Diuisions most uside with cunnyng
Men: the which, if they be well usid, make the sen-
tens very light, and Ely to understond, both to the
Keder and the Herer, and they be these: Virgil, Come,
Parenthesis, Playnt Poynt and Interrogatif. A
Virgil is a Scleander Stryke: lerynge fyrwarde this-
wise / be tokynyng a Lytyl short rest, without any
perfetnes yet of Sentens.

Specimen of an early English Black from matrices made in xvith century.

for French fashions of types. Black Letter maintained its popularity in England and in the Netherlands after it had fallen into disuse in France. Obligated to go to Holland to get types, or the matrices for making types (for England had no type-foundry of note before that of John Day), English printers had to accept with the Dutch types some of the mannerisms of Dutch punch-cutters. The English Black Letter of this period does not seem to have been influenced in any degree by German fashions. The early English Testaments and Bibles were printed at Cologne and at Basle in letters of German form, but the German form was never imitated by English printers.

The preference shown by English readers of the xvth century for Black Letter is fairly indicated by its general employment in popular English books. The first edition (1525) of Tyndall's New Testament was in Black Letter. Tyndall's Pentateuch of 1530 was partly in Roman, but it does not seem to have been an acceptable edition. Coverdale's Bible of 1535 was in Black Letter. Cranmer's "Great Bible" of 1540, printed by Grafton and Whitchurch, was in Black Letter. In this form of type were also printed the authorized prayer-books of the period. During the reign of

Lytell Johan etc, and Lytell Johan dronke,
 The whyle that he woide,
 The Sberpe had in his hechyn a coke,
 A stoute Man and a holde.

English Black
 with Flemish
 mannerisms.

Lytell Johan drewe a good Swerde,
 The Coke took another in hande ;
 They thoughte nathing for to fle,
 But styfly for to stande.

There they fought sore to gyder,
 Two mile way and more,
 Might neyther other harm done,
 The mountenaunce of an houre.

Specimen of an Early English Black from
 matrices made in xvth century.

Black Letter
 popular as a
 text type.





Roman types
preferred by
printers and
literary men.

Catholic Queen Mary, Roman was the proper text letter for books of devotion; but, under the reign of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, prayer-books in Black Letter had the preference. Fox's "Acts and Monuments," intended to strengthen Protestant zeal, appeared, in the first edition of 1560, in the old-fashioned Black Letter. But even then there were indications of an abatement of the prejudices against Roman types. The printers of that time, who must have preferred the Roman letters, so much easier to print, timidly introduced Roman types in the titles and headlines, and Italic types in the prefaces of Black Letter books, and gradually accustomed their readers to the innovation. They distinguished the classics of England as Archbishop Parker did those of ancient Rome; the writings of Bacon and Shakespeare appeared in Roman types.

Black Letter
not entirely
out of fashion.

Black Letter was really out of fashion as a popular text letter at the close of the xvth century, but it was not obsolete. Moxon's book of 1683, from which these specimens are taken of the form of his time, shows that it was then regarded as indispensable in the equipment of a printing-office. It was largely used as a display letter, and, to some extent, for texts of devotional works. It is not out of use yet. According to a recent British reviewer, the laws of Great Britain are still printed in their official form in Black Letter. In my belief, the most admirable form in which the Book of Common Prayer has ever been printed is the Black Letter folio of Pickering, commonly known as the

Victorian Prayer-Book. It is a stately volume. I know of nothing better, of nothing so uniformly good in type, composition, and presswork as this masterpiece of the great publisher.

Among whom Thomas Tomkins, citizen of London and Weaver by his occupation, hath the first place. Now those former persons that hitherto have been Spoken of, were all condemned by Stephan Gardiner, byshop of Winchester, which then was hygh Chauncellour: but he beyng now weary, as it seemeth, of the payne and trouble, put of al the rest to Edmund Boner, byshoppe of London, to be condemned by him.

Types of Fox's
Book of Mar-
tyrs.

Specimen of the Black Letter of Fox's "Acts and Monuments,"
from original matrices.

The popular taste of our time puts aside all early forms of Black Letter as old-fashioned, and altogether too rude. That there are in some styles occasional letters of uncouth form may be admitted; but that many of the Black Letters made in this century as improvements on the old are any better, or even as good, must be denied. Here is the Bold-

**Sacred shades of Moron and Van Dyke,
of Baskerville and Bodoni! what would ye
have said of this typographic monstrosity?**

Bold-faced
Black of 1825.

Specimen of the Bold-face Black of 1825.

faced Black, in high favor with many printers fifty years ago. Are the forms of capitals, improvements? Here too

is the Condensed Black, which had a more recent day of popularity. Its capitals are neatly flourished, and its angles

Condensed
Black of 1855.

It is a nice type—good evidence of the punch-cutter's skill. But what have you done with the strength, the clearness and the dignity of the Old Black Letter?

Specimen of the Condensed Black of 1855.

are duly bristled; it has graceful curves, exact angles, and most delicate hair lines, but whether it has as good general effect, whether it is as readable or even as comely a letter as the older style of the xvith century, may be left to the decision of the reader without another word of comment.

1825.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N

1850.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N

1855.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N

A Contrast of Capitals.



VIII

Styles of Caslon and Baskerville.



JOSEPH MOXON, "mathematical instrument maker, and hydrographer to his majesty, Charles II.," was the first English type-founder of note.¹ His types cannot be compared with those of his more eminent rivals in France and Holland, but they were better than those of other English type-founders of the

A founder from 1659 to 1683.



Model Letters from Moxon's "Mechanick Exercises," 1683.

xviii century. Before and after his time, publishers and men of letters preferred foreign types. The University of Oxford in 1672 paid £4000, a very large sum at that time,

Foreign types preferred.

¹ The type-founding skill of England declined after the death of John Day. The founders authorized by the decree of the Star Chamber in 1637—John Grismand, Thomas Wright, Arthur Nicholas, and Alexander Ffield—produced no types of value. Nor did Moxon have any successor of marked merit.

A. founder
from 1710 to
1738.

for foreign-made types, punches, and matrices. Even as late as 1710, the type-founder Thomas James had to go to Holland to buy matrices and molds not to be had in London.¹ Hansard says that "the glorious works of English literature which immortalized the reign of Queen Anne were originally presented to the public through the medium of Dutch types."

Born 1692.
Died 1766.

William Caslon was the first English founder who shook the faith of his countrymen in the superiority of Dutch founders.² The merit of the Caslon types was not in their novelty of design, but in their careful cutting and good founding. The beauty of uniformity, about which Tory, Jaugeon, and Moxon had written, and which they thought could be had only by strict conformity to mathematical rules, was most signally shown by Caslon, who made rules bend to suit necessities. No founder before him ever succeeded in repeating the same form on many sizes with such precision of style. His largest and his smallest types show unmistakable features of relationship.

Precision of
Caslon's style.

¹ Rowe Mores, in his "Dissertation on English Type Founders and Fonderies," prints three letters written by James, in which he reports the difficulties he met. The Dutch founders were "sly and jealous," ready to sell types, but matrices and molds were not to be had at any price. Athias would not allow James in his house. Voskens "watched me as if I had been a thief."

He had to deal with inferior punch-cutters, and pay high prices.

² Caslon had served his time as an apprentice to an engraver on metal, whose chief work was the decoration of gun-barrels, when his neat lettering attracted the attention of the printer William Bowyer, who persuaded him to devote all his time to the making of types.

A Compleat and Private
List of all the Printing
Houses in and about the
Cities of London and West-
minster, together with the
Printers' Names, what News-
papers they print, and where
they are to be found: also an
Account of all the Printing
Houses in the Towns in
England; and humbly laid
before the Right Honourable
the Lord Viscount Town-
shend, 1724. Bowyer, Printer.

The marked
features of
Caslon's types.

The Caslon face is cleaner and clearer than that of any French or Dutch foundry; it is nearly as light, and is much more inviting than the best letter of Jenson. The body-mark is protracted after the old fashion, as may be seen in the m, t, o; hair lines are frequent in the capital letters, but they are not too thin; angled serifs are used on the top line of the lower case; the short, flat serif appears more freely on foot lines. The triangular stub of Van Dijk appears in the serifs of the capitals, but it is somewhat rounded in a bracket-like curve. The hard angles and stiff curves in letters like a and g are not the fault of bad taste or of carelessness in drawing. Caslon was more intent on making letters readable than on making them pretty; he had the wit to see that some angularity was really needed to give relief to too much roundness. It must also be remembered that the English reader of 1750 was familiar with Black Letter, and had not entirely outgrown a liking for angles. Caslon's style retained its supremacy in England for more than fifty years.¹ It compelled the respectful notice of French and Dutch critics, who had heretofore small respect for English types.

¹ "Beginning early in life, attaining advanced age, and engraving for himself, he had the advantage of completing his specimen on his own plan. For clearness and uniformity, for the use of the reader and the student, it is doubtful whether it has been exceeded by any subsequent production.

. . . From 1720 to 1780 few works were printed with the types of any other foundry. Caslon has since been excelled in individual fonts, but . . . no foundry has shown a collection of sizes and styles which equals his in congruity, or appears so strongly the result of one mind." *Hansard*, p. 350.

John Baskerville, of Birmingham, England, was another amateur who made more serious innovations in the fashion of Roman letter.¹ His first types were influenced by the style of Caslon, but as he gained skill and experience, he developed a style of his own. His matured form of letters appears to best advantage in his folio Bible, and Book of Common Prayer, in which he shows types of round, open form, without excess of angles, and with positive hair lines.

Born 1706.
Died 1775.

Baskerville's
best works.

Baskerville's types have been warmly praised but inaccurately described by Dr. Dibdin. According to modern notions, they were not at all "slender and delicate," but have quite enough of firmness. The peculiarity of his Roman, as compared with other types of his time, is its superior roundness, openness, and clearness. His Italic, on the contrary, is unusually condensed, and shows in many letters the graces of the professional writing-master.

The features
of his types.

¹ In 1726 Baskerville kept a writing-school at Birmingham; in 1745 he engaged in the japanning business. Soon after he attempted type-founding, in which he "sunk £600 before he could produce one letter to please himself, and some thousands before the shallow stream of profit began to flow." Upon the types he made he printed many books of great merit,—the Bible, in imperial folio; Paradise Lost, in 4to and 8vo; Virgil, in 4to and 12mo; the Book of Common Prayer, in 8vo, and an edition of Horace, in 12mo. As a printer Baskerville

was greatly in advance of his rivals; he made his presses; mixed his inks; and hot-pressed his printed sheets, which were either of carefully selected Dutch manufacture, or English papers made under his own direction. His printing was not profitable. In a letter to Walpole, Nov. 2, 1762, he writes, "This business of printing I am heartily tired of, and repent I ever attempted." After his death his foundry was sold in 1779 to a literary society of Paris, and his types were used by Beaumarchais in a great edition of the works of Voltaire.

PRAYERS and THANKSGIVINGS

Upon several Occasions; to be used before the two final Prayers of the Litany, or of Morning and Evening Prayer.

P R A Y E R S.

¶ For Rain.

O God heavenly Father, who by thy Son Jesus Christ hast promised to all them that seek thy kingdom and the righteousness thereof, all things necessary to their bodily sustenance: Send us, we beseech thee, in this our necessity, such moderate rain and showers, that we may receive the fruits of the earth to our comfort, and to thy honour, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Fac-simile of Baskerville's types, from the Book of Common Prayer.

Printers of Baskerville's time objected to this face as too delicate and too liable to injury; readers objected to the lines as too fine and too dazzling to the eyes. The greatest fault of the new style seems to have been that Baskerville printed books from it with greater skill and beauty than any rival had done or could do. It was his misfortune to introduce a style which was in advance of the abilities of the trade. As printing was then done, a proper quality of

Baskerville's
types too thin
for his time.

paper and ink, and proper presses and pressmen, could not be readily found to do the types justice. Seventy years after Baskerville's death, when all these conditions were to be had, his style was revived. It is still esteemed. To many book-lovers the Baskerville style is the embodiment of all that is really praiseworthy in types.

Revival of
Baskerville's
style.

IX

Styles of other British Type-founders.

BEFORE the XVIIIth century had closed, the Caslon style had been adjudged "too stiff"; the Baskerville, "too delicate." Of the two styles, the Baskerville was the less objectionable; but the punches and matrices had gone abroad and could not be recalled, and the types that he left had been worn out. The taste of the day was for roundness and openness of form. Hogarth's new theory that the true line of beauty was in the curve and reversed curve, seems to have been accepted by the many publishers who called for types that should have more of the curve and less of the angle. To meet this want, Joseph Jackson, the ablest apprentice of the first Caslon, designed a style which was intended to combine the good features of all previous types. The best work done with Jackson's new types may be seen in Macklin's

Round and
open types
preferred.

J. Jackson,
born 1733,
died 1792.

Begun 1789.

Macklin's
Bible.

Hansard,
p. 359.

edition of the Bible, as printed by Bensley—an edition in eight volumes of large folio, probably the most extensive edition of the book ever published. The printing was excellent; the style of letter “the most perfect symmetry to which the art had at that time arrived.”¹ One of the peculiarities of this book is the exclusion of *Italic* from the text. Words that should be in *Italic* were indicated by placing dots under the vowels, with intent to avoid the frequent and offensive contrast of oblique *Italic* with upright Roman.

Figgins began
as a master
founder in 1792.

Jackson died before the Bible was complete. His apprentice, Vincent Figgins, was intrusted with the cutting and founding of an exact imitation of this type, which he did creditably. Figgins soon became a popular founder; his styles of types were preferred by the University of Oxford, and by many London publishers.

Martin was a
founder from
1790 to 1817.

William Martin, brother of Robert Martin, of Birmingham, who had served apprenticeship with Baskerville, was another London founder who favored round light-faced types. Bulmer, of the Shakespeare Press, preferred his cut

¹ Jackson had not been taught punch-cutting by Caslon, for that branch of the business was kept by him profoundly secret. All Jackson knew was gained by secret observation and experiment. When he showed to his master his first punch, which had been cut at home after work-hours, instead of receiving praise he was rewarded

with a blow, and a threat to be sent to jail if he ever made another attempt at meddling with work out of his province. This is but one of many evidences of the narrow jealousies of the old type-founders. The elder Caslon and his grandson, the third Caslon, were afterward obliged to acknowledge the merit of Jackson.

of letter, which he made use of to good advantage in Boydell's great edition of Shakspeare.

Boydell's
Shakspeare.

Baskerville's workmanship had raised the standard of printing even higher than that of type-founding. Book buyers called for more neatly printed books, and the books were soon forthcoming. Millar Ritchie, a native of Scotland, led the way with a series of Latin classics, to be followed and distanced by the more fortunate, but not more skillful, Bulmer, Bensley, M'Creery, Corrall, and Whittingham.

A new school
of printers.

Type-founders were not entirely content with the new styles of light faces preferred by the new school of book printers. When they discovered that Bodoni of Italy was printing a book¹ for an English author, in bold types, then supposed to be more beautiful than any in England, they made strong efforts to checkmate the skillful Italian printer. Imitations of the Bodoni style were attempted; the imitators exaggerated his peculiarities; they made sharp hair lines and longer body-marks and serifs, but the great Italian's style was never popular in Great Britain. Nor can it be said that the new style of light faces was popular with the great body of printers. It came before its time. Few printers could use delicate types with profit.

The competi-
tion of Bodoni.

The time for light-faced and delicate types came when needed improvements had been made in presses, paper, and inks. The iron hand-press, which enabled the printer

Printers were
waiting for
improvements.

¹Hansard specifies, on page 313 of his *Typographia*, five books printed by Bodoni for English publishers between the years 1791 and 1794.

Improvements
in presses,
paper and ink.

to print the full size of a large sheet at one impression, with more control over the impression than had been possible on the old wooden press, was invented about 1802, and was in general use in 1812. Paper of greater smoothness and finer texture was made by paper-makers who feared the impending competition of the Fourdrinier machine, which was in successful operation soon after. Some printers believed that they had discovered the secret of the smooth paper of Bodoni and Baskerville, and began to use the screw-press for the pressing of paper both before and after printing. The brilliant black ink of Baskerville had compelled ink-makers to emulation. But the greatest impulse to fine printing was given by a man who had never been taught type-making or printing processes. Thomas Bewick, the reviver of engraving on wood, had demonstrated that even from such a frail substance as boxwood it was possible to produce printed lines of a delicacy which had been thought attainable only by the process of copper-plate printing.

Influence of
Bewick.

Changes of
style by type-
founders.

When it was demonstrated that hair lines could be fairly printed upon an ordinary hand-press, type-founders began to cut finer lines for all new faces. Stubby serifs were rejected, the hair lines were sharpened and extended, and the body-marks were tapered down to meet hair lines. Without meaning to do so, the punch-cutters of this new style were really more intent on showing how truly they could make curves and tapers, than they were on making

legible letters. They forgot that the perspicuity of letters depended quite as much on their well-balanced irregularity as on their uniformity; that a certain degree of angularity and hardness or stiffness of form arrested the eye much more readily than a monotonous roundness. The new styles were admired, but only when the larger sizes were used in large books. They were never effective for common or ordinary books, or for newspapers. Feeble-faced types made ordinary printing seem gray, fuzzy, and indistinct, especially so when the printing was done, as much of it had to be done, with weak ink on poor paper. Old-fashioned printers, and readers with failing eyesight, called for blacker printing and bolder types.

Ineffectiveness
of new styles.

To meet this reasonable request, Robert Thorne of London introduced a new style, which has ever since been known as the Bold-face. It was almost as somber as the old Black Letter. The thickened body-marks made the page blacker, but blackness did not make it more readable. Indeed, it was not as readable as a page in the Caslon style, for the bold-faced types had no proper relief of white either within or without the letters. In spite of this grave fault, the Bold-face was a popular type for at least thirty years, both in England and in America, but it was most pleasing when it was new or little worn. As first made, the serifs were in the French style—long, thin, and without support. Type-founders showed them as evidences of careful cutting and even lining. Printers showed them as

About 1810.

Popularity of
the Bold-face.

IT is a greater misfortune that all the early chronicles of printing were written in a dead language. Wolf's collection of *Typographic Monuments*, which includes nearly every paper of value written before 1740, is in Latin; the valuable books of Meerman, Maittaire, and Schoepflin are also in Latin. To the general reader these are sealed books: to the student, who seeks exact knowledge of the methods of the first printers, they are tiresome books. Written for the information of librarians rather than of printers, it is but proper that these books should devote the largest space to a review of the controversy or to a description of early editions; but it is strange that they should so imperfectly describe the construction and appearance of early types and the usages of the early printers. The mechanical features of typography were, apparently, neglected as of little importance.

THE word printing has acquired a conventional meaning not entirely warranted by its derivation. It means much more than impression. It is commonly understood as a process in which paper and ink are employed in conjunction with impression.

Printing and typography are not strictly synonymous, as might be inferred from the definitions. Typography, although the most useful, is not the only form of printing. Printing on paper with ink is done by four methods. Each method is, practically, a separate art, distinct from its rivals in its theory, in its process, and its application. These methods are :

Steel-plate or Copper-plate printing, in which the subject is printed from an etching or engraving below the surface of a plate of steel or copper.

Lithography, in which the subject is printed from a transferred engraving on the surface of a prepared stone.

Typography, in which the subject is printed from a combination of movable metal types cast in high relief.

Xylography, in which the subject is printed from a design engraved on a block of wood in high relief.

The distinct nature of the substances in use for printing surfaces by the four methods should be enough to teach us that the methods are entirely different. But the manner in which the letters, designs, or figures of each method are put on the respective printing surfaces will show the differences more noticeably.

Weakness of
the Bold-face.

their evidences of clean presswork. But whether attached to light faces or bold faces, they were not durable; they gapped or broke off after moderate wear, and made comparatively new types seem old and badly worn. It took some time for printers to discover that the bold-faces were not durable; that they called for more pressure than the older styles, and that the hair lines were not fairly protected against this overpressure. They began to seek a more durable form, which they found in the letter of Scotch type-founders, who had been neglected for many years.

Wilson began
as a founder
in 1742.

Alexander Wilson, the first type-founder of Scotland, like many of his predecessors, was an amateur, entirely self-taught in the art. More clearly than any of his rivals, he understood the importance of making types that were useful as well as comely. That they were good as well as strong may be inferred from their use by Andrew and Robert Foulis, whose editions of classic authors will compare honorably with those of Barbou or Didot. Wilson's sons maintained the reputation of their father. They in turn set an example to their successors, which has been so strong that the words Scotch type are regarded by all printers as the synonyms of very high mechanical merit. Hansard highly praised them for their refusal to adopt the French flat serif, and for their adherence to the best features of the older forms. But not long after this praise was written, the Scotch founders were making faces as light and hair lines as sharp as those of any French or English founder. The

Andrew Foulis, born 1712, died 1775.
Robert Foulis, born 1707, died 1776.

taste of the time was for sharp hair lines and light open faces, and they were obliged to conform to it.

They conformed with much intelligence. The hair-line serif was connected to the body-mark by means of a bracket-like curve, supported by a sloping shoulder, which gave it strength, while it did not rob it of its old lightness and delicacy; the round form of the Baskerville letter was preserved, and made more graceful by smoother curves; but the curves were more elliptical than round; the letters were more closely fitted and made more compact. Here was a type which gave promise of adaptability to the best or the cheapest books,—a type probably as durable as it was comely. The graceful appearance of the new style, as well as its superior mechanical execution, made it popular everywhere. In France it was called *Écossais*; and the name of Scotch-face was then given by printers, too often inaccurately, to every face in which bracketed serifs were joined to sharp hair lines or graceful curves.

The new
Scotch face.

Its excellent
workmanship.

This fashion had its day. After a long trial, discreet publishers decided that although it was admirable in books of poetry and the fine arts, it was too ornate, too graceful, too feminine for books of history, science, or theology. It was dazzling to the eye; it lacked firmness and boldness. Old-fashioned readers disapproved of it from the beginning of the fashion, as decidedly inferior to the style of the first Caslon. They had reason. The hair line of this Scotch face, as well as of many imitations, is almost the ideal

Not entirely
satisfactory.

mathematical line: it has extension, but no appreciable width. When printed, as much of the book printing of America has been done for the past twenty years, on dry calendered paper, after an inking from hard rollers filmed with stiff ink against a hard surface that would not thicken the line, it showed a faintness and feebleness that had been seen only in a print from copper or steel plate. Here it may be necessary to show, although somewhat out of the order of time, how the fashions of types have been changed to suit different methods of printing.

Lacking in
legibility.

Types made
to suit new
methods of
printing.

Before 1845, all kinds of book and job printing had been done, in America, on dampened paper, by flat platen pressure against thick woolen blankets, or other elastic resisting surface. About, and perhaps a little before, 1850, calendering rollers were used in American paper-mills, and book papers of smooth glossy surface, that did not require dampening, were to be had in every paper-warehouse. On this smooth paper it was not necessary to make use of an elastic resisting surface to sink the types in the fabric, as was necessary on all rough papers. It was only for the purpose of making rough paper pliable and susceptible to impression that it had been dampened. Job printers who made use of small platen job-presses, and wood-cut printers who printed wood-cuts from the wood on hand-presses, found that they got the cleanest and sharpest impressions on smooth dry paper against an inelastic impression surface. In 1850, cylinder presses were used with marked

success for fine printing on dry paper. A new standard of merit in presswork was established. A printed page was esteemed, not, as before, for its blackness, but for its lightness; if the hair lines could be shown with the razor-like sharpness of a copper-plate line, grayness or weakness on the body-marks would be overlooked. Faces of type that showed extremely fine lines were admired: the nearer the imitation of copper-plate, the greater the merit.

Type-founders
imitate style
of engravers.

Type-founders did all they could to promote this false taste, for they were as much pleased as printers to discover that they could make fine lines. Before 1836 they could not have made them by the process of hand-casting from hand moulds. It was not until the type-casting machine had been perfected that these delicate hair lines could be made with unvarying uniformity. Neither printer nor type-founder could see any impropriety in sharp hair lines. They were regarded as evidences of skill, beyond the reach of old-fashioned or inferior workmen, and for that reason to be maintained.

Largely aided
by new type-
casting ma-
chines.



Types of Bodoni, Fournier, Didot, and of later French F unders.

Born 1740.
Died 1813.



LAMBATTISTA BODONI of Parma was the first Italian after Aldus who won the highest honors of typography. Unlike Aldus, his taste was for large types and great books. The ordinary folio page was not big enough to show his broad plans. For his master-pieces he insisted on leaves so wide that the largest press then in use could print only one page at an impression. These large leaves gave ample space for noble printing, but they entailed an objectionable method of binding, for the flat, unfolded leaves could be bound only by "whipstitching" them on the raw edge. He made the peculiar types of many languages, some of great merit; but he did not show the highest skill in his Roman and Italic. His Roman has very long ascenders and descenders, thick body-marks, sharp hair lines, and flat serifs. It betrays a servile obedience to mechanical rules and to geometrical notions of propriety of form. His Italic has more freedom, but the inflexible parallelism of his long body-marks, and his excessive nicety in even lining, at the top as well as at the foot of lines, making round letters tend to squareness,

Formality of
the types of
Bodoni.

FRANÇOIS, duc de la Rochefoucauld, auteur
des Réflexions morales, naquit en 1613.

Son éducation fut négligée; mais la nature
suppléa à l'instruction.

Il avoit, dit madame de Maintenon, une
physionomie heureuse, l'air grand, beaucoup
d'esprit, et peu de savoir.

*Vous avez reçu les félicitations de l'Italie
sur le mariage de l'Héritier de vos vertus
et d'un nom illustre dans les fastes de la
Ville de Bologne; daignez agréer aussi*

Beauty of his
printing.

are wearisome to the eye. Yet he made his types look beautiful by printing them beautifully. Always using the blackest of ink on the smoothest of paper, always providing broad spaces of white relief between his lines and in the margin, always using new types and clean balls, always hot-pressing his sheets,—he showed printing with a perfection of workmanship that astonished as much as it delighted the literary world. On the smaller sizes of type his cut of letter is not so pleasing, nor was his presswork on the small types of greater superiority than that of Barbou of Paris, or of Millar Ritchie and Corrall of London.

Microscopic
type of Milan.

The most noticeable exhibition of skill in recent Italian type-founding is in the strongest contrast to the heroic style of Bodoni. It is the type of a dainty miniature edition of "*La Divina Commedia*," printed at Milan in 1878, on a leaf about 1½ by 2½ inches—a "microscopic type" about twenty lines to the inch.

Early French
punch-cutters.

France has steadily maintained her early reputation for good punch-cutters. The "*Imprimerie Royale*" gave employment from 1640 to 1790 to some of the more famous: to Grandjean and Alexandre, to the family of Luce, father, son, and grandson, as well as to Firmin-Didot, Marcellin Legrand, Jacquemin, Delafond, and Leger-Didot, of later date. Their work and those of their rivals and predecessors are shown with magnificence in the "*Spécimen Typographique*" of 1845, of the then French Royal Printing-house. This book exhibits a bewildering variety of types of foreign

languages, many of the greatest beauty—but it does not show many Roman types of decided superiority.¹

The forms of Roman type made in France during the XVIIIth century, which modern taste calls the best, are those of Pierre Simon Fournier, of Paris. His faces are angular, but they are firm and clear, well designed and clean cut, not unlike those of Caslon in general effect. Fournier rendered a great service to typography by the invention of the system of “typographic points,”—for determining the sizes and the proportions of types,—a system which was gradually adopted by all the founders in France. His merit as a type-founder is fairly proved by the two volumes of his “Manuel Typographique,” beautifully printed by Barbou, which shows many styles of Roman cut by his own hand. They fully justify the good taste of numerous French publishers who have never abandoned his models.

Born 1712.
Died 1768.

Merit of the
types of
Fournier.

The Didot family has done much for the honor of French typography. François Ambroise Didot made great improvements in the manufacture of paper, and became famous as the printer of many beautiful editions. He readjusted the

Born 1730.
Died 1804.

¹ The French forms of Roman types have been out of favor in England for more than a century. Hansard says (p. 382), “The worst pretender to the art of letter-founding in this country needs never light a furnace again were he to show such disproportionate cutting, such miserable lining, and such despicable casting as are exhibited in

both the Roman and Italic of the French school.” Many of the smaller French foundries made types bad enough to justify this severe criticism. Nor were all the punch-cutters of the Royal Printing-house of uniform merit. Firmin-Didot cannot refrain from censuring the pearl types of Louis Luce, as types that could not be read.

Born 1765.
Died 1852.

Microscopic
types of Didot.

typographic points of Fournier, and established the system of sizes which is now in use. His son, Henri Didot, was a famous punch-cutter; at the age of 66 he cut punches for the smallest microscopic types known,—about twenty-five lines to the inch,—on which he printed the *Maxims of Rochefoucauld*. Pierre Didot was equally celebrated as a skillful founder and printer. Jules, his son, was a worthy successor.

Born 1794.
Died 1871.

Types of
Jules Didot.

The form of Roman type which was in highest favor in Paris at the beginning of this century is fairly shown in the following illustration of the types of Jules Didot. A straining after originality may be detected in the forms of the letters **S** and **G**, but, as a whole, this face is not original or characteristic. Even when the types are “set solid” or compact, they have the appearance of “leadèd matter.” Its readability is due largely to the broad relief of white space about every letter. Like the Bodoni letter, it is wasteful of space. The flat extended serif is in imitation of the style of Jaugeon; the tall ascenders and descenders, the squared forms of small letters, the wide spaces between lines and in the margin are in imitation of the style of Bodoni. It was shown with best effect in large sizes. In the smaller sizes, it was not much more pleasing than the ordinary English bold-face.

Large face of
Fournier.

For plain books, in which the greatest compactness of letter was desired, another face was preferred, which Fournier presents in many sizes, in his “*Manuel Typographique*,”

FABULA XII.

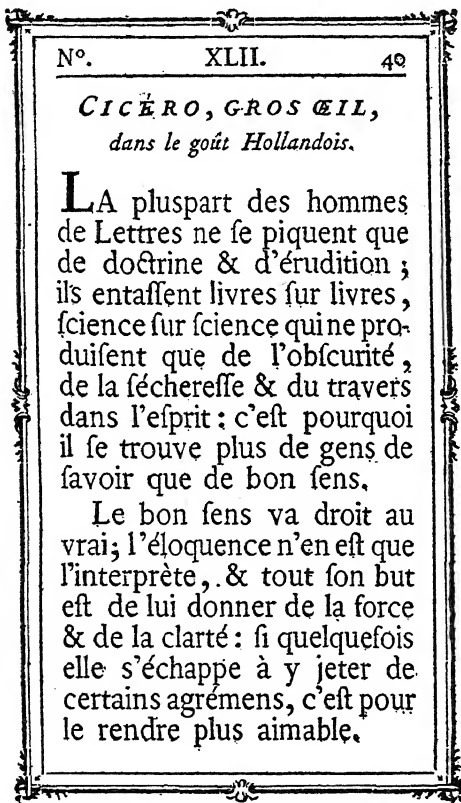
Pullus ad Margaritam.

In sterculino Pullus gallinaceus
Dum quaerit escam, Margaritam repperit.
Iaces indigno, quanta res, inquit, loco!
Te si quis pretii cupidus vidisset tui,
Olim redîsses ad splendorem pristinum.

Fac-simile of types of Jules Didot, from an edition in folio of *Æsop's Fables*.

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introducing it as “dans le goût Hollandois.” The short letters are compressed, and of unusual height, while the ascenders and descenders are shortened. The capital letters are not condensed at all, and seem disproportionately large. The flat serifs at the foot of lines and angled serifs at the top are unusually short. The body-marks are thinner; the hair lines have more slenderness. Effort has been made to give openness in the counters. It is a very readable type, but not so economical of space as it appears. More lines can be got in a page, but not so many letters in a line, as compared with types of a more recent fashion



Fac-simile of Fournier's "Large Face," from the *Manuel Typographique*.

that have shorter ascenders and descenders. This style was popular in France and Holland for nearly a century before

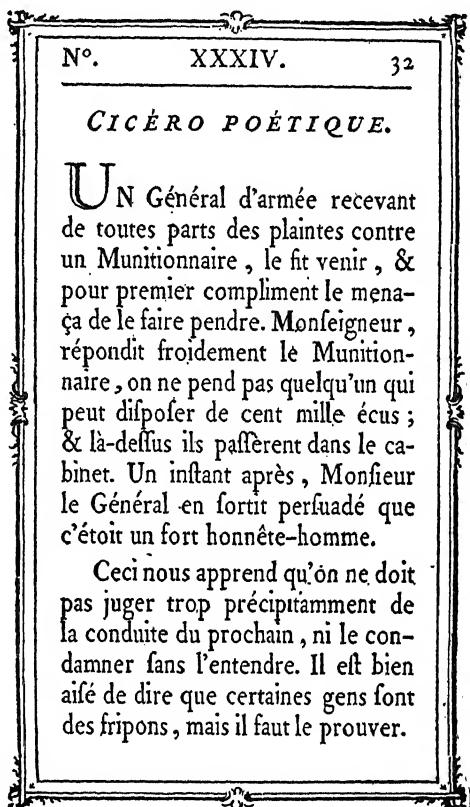
Peculiarities
of Large face.

A popular type
in France.

its features were even imperfectly copied in England. It has always been popular in France, and, with more or less of modification, is still so much in use that, despite its Dutch origin, it is known to English readers as the French face.

Not admired in England.

This Large face had its limitations of service. French publishers of taste thought it too bold and coarse for poetry and dainty books. For this purpose Fournier was induced to cut the accompanying "Poetic" face, which is more slender and has ascending and descending letters of unusual length. It is not so popular as it has been, but it cannot be regarded as entirely out of fashion.



Poetic face of Fournier.

Fac-simile of Fournier's "Poetic Face," from the Manuel Typographique.

One of the many varieties of this condensed face has the novelty of very thin body-marks, with strong or firm hair

Recent form
of Condensed
face.

lines. There is a difference in thickness between body-mark and hair line, but it is very slight. The thinning of the body-mark allows more relief of white space in the counter, while the thickened hair line gives increased firmness and clearness to each character. To this peculiarity is added the innovation of capital letters that are not so high as the ascending letters. This dwarfing of the capitals, obviously in imitation of the dwarfed capitals of Aldus, has the merit of providing a suitable space for accents. Although smaller than usual, these capitals seem large enough for the service required of them. In all texts where capitals are used in excess these dwarfed capitals are an improvement. Although a compact and readable letter, largely used by French publishers for the extracts of a text, this style is not approved of by English or American founders.

Origine de la famille des Grolier. — Étienne Grolier, père de Jean, attaché à la maison de Louis XII, devient trésorier de l'armée d'Italie et élu de la ville de Lyon. — Jean succède à son père dans cette double charge. — Il est nommé ambassadeur à la Cour de Rome. — Son fils naturel. — Son mariage. — Ses enfants. — Nommé trésorier des finances d'Outre-Seine et Yonne, puis trésorier de France. — Ses attributions. — Sa querelle avec Benvenuto Cellini. — Ses rapports avec le maréchal de Montmorency, grand-maître de France, et l'élu Bertereau, secrétaire du maréchal. — Procès en concussion qui lui est intenté par la Cour des comptes au Parlement; heureuse issue de ce procès jugé par Christophe de Thou. — Admonitions qu'il reçoit du Parlement pour l'entretien du Palais.

XI

Revival of Old Style.



ONE evil that followed the rapid changes in the styles of type made during the first half of this century was the employment, often unavoidable, of two or more of these styles in the same book.

Faults of
types made
after 1800.

Many of the new styles had been cut for a particular book, and had been cast to one size only; few were made in a full series of graduated sizes. A text in bold face sometimes had extracts in round light face and notes in angular condensed face—styles painfully unlike, and to the eye of the educated reader as offensive as a page of manuscript in three different styles of handwriting.¹ Another and a greater evil was the tendency of punch-cutters to develop features of delicacy and prettiness rather than those which gave

Pretty, but
weak.

¹“Upon comparing the books of the time of the celebrated William Caslon with those of the present day, it will be seen that a complete change in the shape and styles of types has taken place. His founts rarely occur in modern use, but they have too frequently been superseded by others which can claim no excellence over

them. In fact, the book-printing of the present day is disgraced by a mixture of fat, lean, and heterogeneous types, which to the eye of taste is truly disgusting; and it may perhaps be said with truth that a much greater improvement has taken place in the printing of hand-bills than of books.”
Hansard, *Typographia*, p. 355.

Pickering's
preference for
strong types.

strength and legibility. The reform, or rather the return to simpler methods, was begun by William Pickering of London, the publisher so deservedly honored for his good taste in making books.

Born 1767.
Died 1840.

About the year 1850, he planned the reprint of a book of the xviiith century for which he needed a characteristic and appropriate type. Neither Whittingham nor any other printer of London had the type he wanted. Of bold, black and uncouth types, of mechanically neat but characterless types, of round, graceful and femininely delicate types, there was abundant supply; of what might be called masculine types, that should show at a glance that they had been made with the direct purpose of helping the reader, and not at all to show the skill of the punch-cutter, not one style could be found in the stock of any printing-house. Disappointed but not defeated, he went to the type-founders. There he found not types but matrices. He persuaded the Caslon house to take out of their punch-closet a series of matrices made by the first Caslon, which had been put aside as "too old-fashioned," and to cast therefrom a font of types which was at once put to service.

Restoration
of Caslon's
matrices.

Provoked
criticism.

The book made from these types was beautifully printed, but the strange letter provoked criticism. Some said that this revival of an obsolete style was an affectation, an exhibition of typographical pedantry. Young readers did not like it at all; old readers liked it much. Even the careless reader, prejudiced against it on first sight, who knew noth-

ing of its history and cared nothing for its associations, had to admit, after an hour's perusal, that the types were easy to be read. A few months of familiarity established the old style in general favor. Pickering was encouraged to make use of it for other works. Then other publishers began to inquire for printers who had old style types, and other type-founders restored to useful service the neglected and despised matrices of the previous century. In a few years, the old style was as popular in France and America as it was in Great Britain; it became a letter necessary to the equipment of every good book printing-house.

Soon became popular.

Not all of the restorations made by the different founders were warrantable. Some suites of matrices were drives of badly cut punches that never should have been made—that never were used even in their own period by any reputable printer. To a few indiscriminating publishers who seemed to think, if they thought at all about it, that bad workmanship would be regarded by the reader as evidence of greater age, the uncouthness of mean designs gave the types higher value. Some grave mistakes were made then, and are made now, in the selection of old style letter for good books. Types made by old bunglers in type-founding,—types made for and used by only the ignorant printers of chap books and penny ballads,—types that Tonson and even Curll would not have had at any price, occasionally appear in books intended to suggest the special good taste and discrimination of the author or publisher.

Injudicious restoration of bad types.

Errors made in selection of old style.

Mannerisms
discarded.

The type-founders who had no old matrices of old style in their punch-closets, and were obliged to cut new punches, did not copy the designs of inexpert founders. They cut with intent to improve, and, in the main, cut wisely. Obsolete mannerisms were discarded; the long f and its train of double letters were dropped. The proportions of each letter were re-adjusted; lean letters were made fat, and fat letters made lean, with view to better effect in mass.

Attempts to
add modern
graces.

Some founders went far beyond this in the line of attempted improvement. They rounded hard curves, and re-adjusted angles; made thinner the strong body-marks, and reduced the firm hair line to a razor-edge. So treated, the character of the old style was seriously changed. The angular terminations, the high shoulder, the square form, even when reproduced with great fidelity, were not enough to preserve the general effect. This modernized old style is undoubtedly more popular than the old form of Caslon; each character is more symmetrical, but the combined characters are not so pleasing in mass. Here are two examples of attempts at improvement. In the larger size short ascenders and still shorter descenders are attached to small letters of unusual lightness and roundness. The lines are light and the types are open, yet the types in mass are gray in color and feeble in effect. In the smaller size the lightness of the type is measurably relieved by a greater proportion of white space between the lines, but in this size, as in the other, there is a deficiency in strength of form and of

See pp. 89, 91.

Weakness of
the modern
old style.

I GIVE and bequeath one thousand pounds for the use of one Journeyman Compositor...who is a man of good life and conversation, who shall frequent some place of public worship every Sunday and who shall not have worked on a newspaper or magazine for four years at least before such nomination, nor shall ever afterwards whilst he holds this annuity, and who shall be able to read and construe Latin, and at least to read Greek fluently with accents, of which he shall bring a testimonial from the rector of St. Martin's, Ludgate.

From the will
of William
Bowyer, died
1777.

Double Small Pica No. 20, from the foundry of George Bruce's Son & Co.
An attempt to combine old style features with modern graces.

firmness of color. The types are graceful, but the printed page is monotonously gray. Complaints are sometimes made that modern printing is deficient in blackness; that the ink of a good modern book cannot be compared with that of an old book in the feature of depth and vigor of color. In many instances the fault complained of is rather in the type than in the ink. The first condition for securing the vivid blackness desired is a type that will show color—a type that has sufficient breadth of body-mark and firmness of hair line to take off the inking roller a reasonable amount of black ink. All early types had and most modern types have not this fair flat surface. There are few modern publishers who will allow printers to select types of firm face for any work. The taste of the time is for lightness and delicacy, and the features of strength and boldness have to be sacrificed in favor of this feminine inclination. These modernized old-style types are good illustrations of the prevailing fashion.

There are men of letters who will accept none of the modern imitations. They concede that the modern forms are more carefully drawn, and have the highest mechanical finish, but they maintain that in strength, attractiveness, and perspicuity the old-style letter, as cut by Caslon and Fournier, has not been improved by any copyist.

Yet many of the new forms have merits of their own. Although one founder has taken for model the style of Caslon, another that of Baskerville, another that of the Dutch

Firm-faced
types needed
for black
printing.

Old forms still
in favor.

Old style not
a descriptive
name.

THE proprietors of the paper, entitled *The Idler*, having found that those essays are inserted in the newspapers and magazines with so little regard to justice or decency, that the *Universal Chronicle*, in which they first appear, is not always mentioned, think it necessary to declare to the publishers of those collections, that however patiently they have hitherto endured these injuries, made yet more injurious by contempt, they have now determined to endure them no longer. They have already seen *essays, for which a very large price is paid*, transferred with the most shameless rapacity into the weekly or monthly compilations, and their right, at least for the present, alienated from them before they could themselves be said to enjoy it. . . . But those who have been thus busy with their sickles in the fields of their neighbors, are henceforward to take notice, that the time of impunity is at an end. Whoever shall, without our leave, lay the hand of rapine upon our papers, is to expect that we shall vindicate our due, by the means which justice prescribes, and which are warranted by the immemorial prescriptions of honourable trade. We shall lay hold, in our turn, on their copies, degrade them from the pomp of wide margin, and diffuse typography, contract them into a narrow space and sell them at an humble price; yet not with a view of growing rich by confiscations, for we think not much better of money got by punishment, than by crimes: we shall, therefore, when our losses are repaid, give what profit shall remain to the magdalens: for we know not who can be more properly taxed for the support of penitent prostitutes, than prostitutes in whom there yet appears neither penitence nor shame.

LONDON, Jan. 5th, 1759.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Made to suit
modern re-
quirements.

founders, in each copy is noticeable an adaptation, sometimes without any set purpose, to the fashions or mannerisms of the present time, or to the requirements of modern methods of presswork. Some are thin, some are fat, some are square, but all are labeled old style. These faces, alike in some points, are unlike in others, and are not clearly defined by this ambiguous name. The purer and more characteristic styles should be known by names that fairly describe them.

xviiith century
style.

The Elzevir or xviiith century style, of which an illustration is given on the next page, is so called because it is a fac-simile of types in a book printed at Leyden in 1659, probably by John Elzevir. But we have little warrant for believing that this "Elzevir"¹ style was designed by a Dutch type-founder, for it is unlike any type made by Van Dijk or his rivals. Its peculiar features are those of the French type-founders of that period. Didot says that the most beautiful books of the Elzevirs were printed from types designed and cast by Garamond and Sanlecque. It is probable that this form of old style is of French origin. The most noticeable peculiarity of this style is the stubbiness or "club-footedness" of its short serifs. Hair-lines are few, and, when used, are short and of unusual thickness. It would be difficult to point out in any character a useless mark or stroke. Of all the typographic forms of Roman

Essai sur la
Typographie,
p. 699.

Probably of
French cut.

¹ This style of type was seldom used by the Elzevirs. Although they bought types in France, most of their books were printed on Dutch types.

I AM indebted to you, and more so, perhaps, than you imagine. The honor of Roman citizenship is even less than the benefit you have conferred on me. For what do you think was this honor in comparison with that of being placed in the ranks with your authors? It is to rank with the consuls and senators of Rome; it is to be made fellow with the Sallusts and Ciceros! What glory it is to rightfully say, I am a member of this immortal republic! I have been received in the society of the demi-gods! Practically, we live together at Leyden under the same roof. Thanks to your kindness, I am sometimes facing Pliny, sometimes by the side of Seneca; at other times I am placed above Tacitus or Livy. Although I have but a small place there, it is as good as any: I do not leave it but to be at my ease, and to please myself in this delightful company. To say the least, all of me is there, however small the place I occupy. Homer, our patriarch, has been much more crowded than I am: he who lodged him in a shell was a more penurious manager than you have been of the accommodation you provided. Whether your art is shown in large or in small books, it is always to your credit as an artisan. There are workmen who have won fame by making pyramids and colossal figures. And there are others who are celebrated for their rings and seals. Does not history speak with esteem of a four-horse chariot which a fly could cover with its wings? As this is well known—as perfection in workmanship is most frequently conceded to the skillful handling of materials, and not to their prodigal use—I have no right to complain that you have put me in a small volume. Although I am not published in folio, I am none the less, gentlemen,

Your very humble and obliged servant,

[Written 1651.]

BALZAC.

capitals known to me, this style seems the closest approach to the simplicity of the early letters of ancient Rome.¹

Ronaldson
Old Style.

The most characteristic of modern faces of old style is that of the Ronaldson series, from the foundry of the MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan Company, in which the angular features of the face are developed in the most pronounced manner. The characters are not so thick and black as those of the old founders, but they are much more symmetrical; they are squarer and more open, of sharper cut and of as clear and firm face. The "Ronaldson" is in all points a very readable and durable letter.

The continued popularity of the revived old style face shows that it is not a passing fashion. It has come to stay. But is it always judiciously used? There are men of letters who hold that there should be propriety in the dress of the book as in the dress of the man. Each should be of its own time. There are publishers and printers who say that the old style face should be restricted to reprints of old books, or to sober writings addressed entirely to the understanding and not to the imagination. The time may come when a new novel or poem will be adjudged as odd in old style types as the author would appear if he were clothed in the old style garments of the last century.

Old Style is
best fitted for
old books.

¹About thirty years ago an unknown type-founder of Lyons cut (or revived?) a few sizes of old style Roman capitals, differing greatly from this xviii century style, but remarkable for its quaintness and for its close imitation

of the mannerisms of the early Italian printers. Types of this style occasionally appear in the titles of a few recent French books, but I have been unable to get the types or even to learn the name of the founder.

JAMES RONALDSON, the son of William Ronaldson, was born in 1768, at Gorgie, near Edinburgh, and died in Philadelphia in 1842. In 1794 he came to Philadelphia, in the sailing-vessel Providence. Shortly after his arrival he renewed his acquaintance with Mr. Archibald Binny, whom he had previously known in Scotland. For a year or two after his arrival in this country, Ronaldson carried on a biscuit bakery. His establishment was destroyed by fire in 1796, so that he found himself out of an occupation. It is related that about this time he encountered Binny in an ale-house; their acquaintance ripened into a friendly intimacy, and they soon learned each other's views and prospects. The natural result was the formation of a copartnership between them, beginning November 1, 1796, establishing the first permanent type-foundry in the United States. Ronaldson furnished the greater portion of the capital, and assumed control of the financial branch of the business. Binny, who was a practical type-founder, and had carried on the business in Edinburgh, contributed his tools, stock of metal, and types, and superintended the manufacturing department. The connection proved mutually advantageous, and a prosperous business was the result. American printers, who had hitherto relied on British founders for their supply of type, patronized the new establishment, and, in Mr. Ronaldson's words, "the importation of foreign type ceased in proportion as Binny & Ronaldson became known to the printers.

Ronaldson Series, Pica Old Style, No. 4. Solid.

From the foundry of the MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan Company.

XII

Types of American Founders.

Recent forms
of types.



HAVE now to notice types recently made which cannot yet be regarded as historic. It seems necessary to mention them, if for no other reason, to illustrate the progress of change in styles. That some of them will be used for the printing of books that may be prized hereafter needs no explanation. If not historic now, they will be.

Beginning of
American
type-founding.

Until the beginning of this century, American printers depended on the type-founders of England for their supplies. Types had been made here before, but in amateurish fashion.¹ Franklin, who was one of the amateurs, has told us how he was compelled to cast the types that he needed. Binny and Ronaldson may be regarded as the fathers of the art in this country. Their success soon led to the estab-

¹ The earliest American type-founders of which I can find any record were Christopher Sauer, Germantown, 1735
— Mitchelson, Boston, Mass. 1768
Abel Buell, New Haven, Conn. 1769
John Baine, Philadelphia, Penn. 1790
Binny & Ronaldson, Philadelphia, 1796
Elihu White & Wing, Hartford, 1810
David & George Bruce, New York, 1814

George Lothian, New York, . . . 1822
William Hagar, New York, . . . 1824
James Conner, New York, . . . 1827
Laurence Johnson, Philadelphia, 1833
Samuel Nelson Dickinson, Boston, 1847

Some of these founders were printers before they began to make types. The date when they abandoned their first art is not readily found.

lishment of rival type-foundries in New York and Boston. Considering the difficulties encountered by the pioneer American founders in getting proper tools and skilled workmen, the quality as well as the quantity of types made by them before 1835 is remarkable.¹ Their workmanship was good, but not one style of the many they cast can be offered as original or even really characteristic. All the founders took British forms for their models. The styles of Jackson, Thorne, Fry, Martin, and Wilson successively came in and went out of fashion. No one tried to imitate or to copy the styles of Fournier, Didot, Bodoni, or the Dutch founders. No one tried to originate new forms or features.

British types
only taken as
models.

The contributions which America made to type-founding were in the field of mechanical improvement. The type-casting machine, invented by David Bruce, Jr., of New York, in 1838, and soon after introduced in all American foundries, has been adopted, in its more valuable features, by the type-founders of all countries. It made a revolution in the business, by producing types quicker, cheaper, and better than they had been made by the old hand-casting process. Ornamental types which could not be profitably made by hand were properly cast by the machine.

Change made
by invention
of type-cast-
ing machine.

The growing use of ornamental types was soon after largely increased by the introduction of small printing machines, specially made for printing cards and circu-

¹Early American printing also deserves more respectful notice than it has received. Franklin's edition of "Cato Major" and Fry & Kammerer's edition of Joel Barlow's "Columbiad" are books of excellent workmanship.

Changes made
by invention
of small print-
ing machines.

lars, of which the machine invented by George P. Gordon may be offered as one of the earliest and the most popular. These machines enabled letter-press printers to print many varieties of printing which had been done only by lithographers and copper-plate printers. Clean, sharp impressions were easily obtained on the new machines when dry and smooth paper was used against a hard, inelastic resisting surface. After some years of successful practice of this method, the process of dry printing was adopted on the larger machines used for book printing, with similar results.

Appearance of
printed work
changed by
new methods.

This attempted rivalry with copper-plate, previously noticed, has made great changes in the perspicuity of books. The firm presswork of the last century, the clearness of text which makes reading a delight, has well-nigh disappeared. We have in recent books more careful presswork from types of graceful proportions; but the color of the print is too often more gray than black, the lines are weak, the letters "run together," and are dazzling and confusing, a never-ending annoyance to men of failing eyesight. Types made sharp enough by the type-founder are made still sharper by feeble presswork. The modern pressman is daily enjoined not to over-color, not to thicken hair line, not to wear out plates or types.¹ Cautions like these induce him to take the safe side; he gives as little ink and as

¹ Unwillingness to wear out plates, or to pay for the time of the pressman who tries to prevent or lighten this wear, is the underlying motive of the

publisher's objection to strong presswork. But some wear is unavoidable. Printing is impression, and impression means wear.

feeble impression as he can—and he produces presswork which few good hand-pressmen of the last generation would have dared to offer their employers.

Great changes in the appearance of types are also made by different methods of presswork. Rough or smooth paper, wet or dry paper, hard or elastic impression will produce from the same types changes in the appearance of printing that seem incredible to those who are not familiar with practical presswork. An elastic or “soaking” impression from new types on wet, coarse or laid paper will have the thickness and bluntness of worn-out letter; on hard, smooth paper, impressed against hard surface, the same types can be made to show hair lines almost as delicate as those of a copper-plate. This delicate method of printing, with a corresponding delicacy in the cut of the types, is now in favor, and it is seldom that a printer can find a publisher who will help him in any attempt to change the fashion.¹

Changed also
by different
papers and
treatment.

Delicate faces
of type now
in fashion.

Daily newspapers, the largest consumers of types in this country, have necessarily received from the type-founders more attention than books. Peculiar styles have been designed for newspapers that are admirably fitted to resist the wear of stereotyping by the papier-maché process, as well

¹ Not long ago Mr. Henry O. Houghton, of the “Riverside Press,” solicited a foreign type-founder to make for him a series of firm-faced types, flat enough to take generous color, and firm enough to withstand strong impression, for which he furnished as models the types

of an old Venetian book. The founder declined, saying that the taste of the time was for light-faced types, and that he would cast no other. Mr. Houghton has since had the types made in Boston. Their popularity shows the soundness of his judgment.

Condensed
forms out of
fashion.

as the rough usage they have to receive on rapid printing-machines. The style of type that promised to give the greatest compactness with the greatest apparent clearness was the style most approved by newspaper publishers of forty years ago. These virtues were supposed to be found in the highest degree in types that were tall and condensed. They enabled a publisher to get more letters in a fixed space than could be done with types of the ordinary face; but they did not keep the promise of greater readableness. They wore out sooner, were more slowly composed, and justified compositors in asking a higher price for their work. This form of type is now almost entirely neglected.

A standard
form for type
impracticable.

The varieties of form that have already been shown, the temporary popularity of a novel face and the revival of a disused face, are evidences that it is more impracticable now than ever to fix by general agreement a standard of form. Admirable as any new face may now appear, it will not always be popular. Minor changes may be looked for. The style of types must be adapted to suit new methods of printing and stereotyping as well as to meet the unceasing craving for novelty.

Round and
broad faces
preferred.

Round and open faces are now in favor, of which style the types of this text will serve as an illustration. The bold face of the next page is another favorite for quartos and folios. Faces even broader than this are sometimes used in books, but more commonly in pamphlet work.

Hadrian
Junius, Bata-
via, p. 255.
Lugduni Bata-
vorum, 1688.

POSTEA faginas formas plumbeis mutauit, has deinceps stanneas fecit, quò solidior minusque flexilis esset materia, durabiliorque: è quorum typorum reliquijs quæ superfuerant conflata cœnophora vetustiora adhuc hodie visuntur in Laurentianis illis, quas dixi, ædibus in forum prospectantibus, habitatis postea à suo pronepote Gerardo Thoma, quem honoris caussa nomino, ciue claro, ante paucos hos annos vita defuncto sene. Fauentibus, vt fit, inuento nouo studijs hominum, quum noua merx, nunquam antea visa, emptores vndique exiret cum huberrimo questu, creuit simul artis amor, creuit ministerium, additi famulix operarum ministri, prima mali labes, quos inter Ioannes quidam siue is (vt fert suspicio) Faustus fuerit ominoso cognomine, hero suo infidus & infaustus, siue alius eo nomine, non magnopere laboro, quòd silentum vmbras inquietare nolim, contagione cōscientiæ quondam dum viuerent tactas. Is ad operas excusorias sacramento dictus, postquam artem iungendorum characterum, fusilium typorum peritiam, quæque alia eam ad rem spectant, percalluisse sibi visus est, captato opportuno tempore, quo non potuit magis idoneum inueniri, ipsa nocte quæ CHRISTI natalitijs solennis est, qua cuncti promiscuè lustralibus sacris operari

Light faces of
round form.

For illustrated works that are widely leaded and have broad margins, the large and light round face, of which an illustration is given on this page, is frequently used with excellent effect. It is not a type that can be wisely used in crowded space.

Robert Stephens, preface
to Thesaurus
of 1572.

YOU are mistaken, reader, if you imagine this work (except a few portions) to have been written in any other way than by the printer's clock. That is to say: as typographical works are subjected to stipulated daily tasks, I bound myself to produce a stated quantity of copy, which had to be done at a fixed hour. Nor was the time, short as it was, allowed for the task, exempt from other occupations and business of a varied nature, relating to my professional and domestic concerns. At times I had to lay aside my pen ten times in one hour.

Pica Light Face, from the foundry of Farmer, Little & Co., New York.

For the catalogue work of jobbing printers a still broader face is in favor, of which an illustration is given on the next page. But this is a type not allowed in standard books.

In the composition of book titles, the inflexibility of the Roman capital has been found an annoyance. Where a

fixed number of words or letters are prescribed for one line, capitals of proper size are often found to be too thin or too thick, making the line too long or too short. The severer taste of the present day does not permit the wide spacing-out of the letters of a short line, nor the mutilation of a long line

Types for
book titles.

THEY that tear or cut books of the Old or New Testament, or the Holy Doctors, or sell them to the depravers of books or to the Apothecaries, are excommunicated for one year. They also that buy them to corrupt them, let them be excommunicated.

A canon of a
council of the
viii century.

Pica Expanded No. 180, from the foundry of George Bruce's Son & Co., New York.

by a division with hyphen, as was customary in the early days of printing. This difficulty has been evaded, after a fashion, by the use of expanded and condensed capitals, which seem to have been first made in France about the year 1830, for I do not find them in books of earlier date. They were first made in the varieties of capitals only, to be used as two-line letters for the display of titles or as initials or headings of

Condensed
title letter.

Condensed
forms going
out of use.

chapters. Their slender, graceful shapes were then a pleasing contrast to the squat and stubby faces of the rude old capital. Publishers preferred them: for many years no title was regarded as in good form if not composed in the graceful condensed letter. They have been cut by many founders,

FRANÇOIS AMBROISE DIDOT WAS A
FAMOUS TYPE-FOUNDER AND AN ACCURATE PRINTER OF
CLASSIC TEXTS. BORN 1730, DIED 1804.

Two-line Pearl Condensed No. 121, from the foundry of George Bruce's Son & Co.

for all the useful sizes, and of every degree of width, but they are declining in favor. There are publishers and printers who prohibit them entirely in titles.

Difficulties of
composing
title-pages.

The composition of title-pages is more of a task now than it was fifty years ago. As a rule, the more words there are in a title, the more ineffective is the composition. Difficulties seem to increase with the increase in styles of types. The reader reasonably wants a title that shall fairly set forth the subject; the author wants this too, but he also wants prominence given to some words and lines. Trying to please the author, the printer has to make, or thinks he has to make, a painfully nice balancing of long lines and short lines, of big and little types, of broad and narrow blanks, and to put in, here and there, a sprinkling of *Italic* and *Black Letter*, to break up the monotony of upright capitals. The effect of composition done in this manner is

seldom pleasing, but authors and publishers who try to amend the work of the printer are rarely successful. Not one title in ten is good. Nor can it ever be made good by any manner of composition which puts the cart before the horse; which makes offensively prominent the art of the printer or type-founder, and diverts the reader's attention from the words and the meaning of the author to the contemplation of an elaborately artificial arrangement.¹

Largely made so by artificial arrangements.

These frequent failures are also largely the result of the "heterogeneous mixture" of styles which Hansard denounced. This mixture seems unavoidable. The most pleasing and most used styles of book texts are made of few sizes. Large and very large sizes of the same style as the text are seldom made, and are rarely kept in the stock of any book-printer. In the composition of a title the printer has to contrast on the same page bold and light and condensed styles in a manner which makes a bad effect, however careful the arrangement. He has no choice, for the standard form of modern Roman letter is deplorably deficient in variety of large sizes. There are very few series of standard letter which show graduation of size and uniformity of face as fully as the series shown on the next page.

Titles spoiled by the mixtures of faces.

¹ After many failures with his titles, Pickering discarded nearly all of the prevailing typographical rules about the balancing and the artificial display of lines. Selecting a few sizes of

plain round capitals (rejecting all condensed styles), he arranged his title lines with little or no display, with the simple directness of the rude but good titles of the books of the early printers.

Revival of
early forms
of capitals.

PM The present popularity of the old style has encouraged
PM French type-founders to revive other early printed forms,
PM but they seem to regard the imitation of early manu-
PM script forms as a reversion to barbarism and ugliness.
PM But this imitation has been cleverly done by artists
PM who have undertaken to make designs for book titles
PM and book covers. Some have gone far beyond early
PM typographic models, selecting the early Roman let-
PM ter—the plain capital without serif or hair line,
PM with an almost absolute uniformity of thick line.
PM Others have copied and exaggerated the manner-
isms of mediæval copyists and engravers,
PM with all their faults, bundling words together
PM without proper relief between lines, dividing
PM them by periods and not by spaces, until they
are almost unreadable. The closely huddled
and carelessly formed letters of Botticelli
PM and other early Italian engravers are even
PM preferred by many artists to the simple,
PM severe, and easily read letters of chiseled
PM inscriptions on the stones of ancient
Rome.

Preferences
for careless
forms.

PM There has been an eccentric de-
PM parture in another direction. Some
PM designer has asked these questions:
PM Why copy letter forms of any origin?
PM Why should letters always be as stiff

as soldiers on parade? Why should an O be round and an L right-angled? Why should types be made to line? Why not give to printed letters some of the dash and swing and character of free-hand copying? Why not have printed letters that shall be artistic and æsthetic? These questions

The new taste
for grotesque
forms of type.

HOLOFERNES ON PRONUNCIATION.

I abhor such fantastical fantasies, such insociable and point-devisé companions; such rackers of orthography as to speak dout fine, when he should say doubt; det when he should pronounce debt—d-e-b-t, not d-e-t; he clepeth a calf, cauf; half, hauf; neighbour vocatur nebour; neigh abbreviated ne: this is abominable (which he would call abomlnable); it insinuateth me of insipile. Love's Labour Lost.

The last novelty. From the foundry of George Bruce's Son & Co.

have been practically answered by the occasional appearance on book covers, and in the pages of magazines, of eccentric forms of letters which have been reduced to types by many American type-founders. They do not put the standard or approved form of Roman letter out of fashion.

Plainness of
book types.

Many years ago a cynical Frenchman sneered at England as the country of a dozen religions and of one sauce. Yet Frenchmen and Englishmen, and Americans too, persist in a simplicity of taste concerning letters which some

Extract from
*Gospel Order
Revived*, or an
answer to Rev.
Mr. Increase
Mather, a book
printed in New
York in 1700.

ADVERTISEMENT. The Reader is desired to take Notice, that the Press in Boston is so much under the aw of the Reverend Author whom we answer, and his Friends, that we could not obtain of the Printer there to Print the following Sheets, which is the only true Reason why we have sent the Copy so far for its Impression, and where it is printed with some Difficulty.

may regard as equally narrow. The calligrapher of the middle ages, who delighted to show his skill in new forms of letters, would despise the plainness of our printed books. There are modern readers, also, who admire the freedom of the letters made by engravers; others, again, who like the quaintness of the letters of mediæval books, compared with which Roman and Italic letters seem stiff, ungraceful, and incapable of pleasing combinations. To please these tastes, and others not so severe, modern type-founders make many forms of ornamental types; engravers and lithographers are daily devising other forms of more or less ingenuity and merit. All of them have admirers; but, though all may be useful, at least in the broad field of job printing, they are not permitted in the standard book. The world of letters is full of alphabets, and there are many of them that can be easily read, but printers and publishers and readers are fully agreed that all standard works shall be in Roman. No publisher dares print magazines or important volumes in types that deviate from the Roman model. Whatever the subject-matter, whether for the child in his nursery or for the wise man in his study, the book must be in Roman; for it is with types as with dress—at proper times man may wear any style of dress that pleases his fancy, but when he appears in evening society it must be in the conventional suit. There is no appeal.

Ornamental
types not
admitted in
standard
books.

Whatever differences of opinion may exist concerning the relative merits of old and modern types in the matter of per-

High mechan-
ical merit of
modern types.

spicuity, there is no fair room for argument about the superior mechanical construction of modern type. Types were never made as well as they are made now. Drawing was never so correct. Cutting was never so deep and clean, nor even lining so true. The bodies of types were never before made so solid, so uniform, so exact. The mechanical workmanship of a second-rate modern founder is far better than that of Jenson or Van Dijck. It should be better. The old founders were self-taught; they did not work with proper scientific system; their tools, compared with those now in general use, were rude and inexact. The greatest fault of modern type-founding—the disagreement in the sizes of different foundries, an evil which seems now impossible of correction—is an inherited fault. It comes from the inability of the old founders to see the advantages of system.

The Roman
letter practi-
cally unalter-
able.

That the Roman letter is not free from fault, every one will admit. There are letters that might be altered with advantage; there are sounds that need new characters; but every attempt at the radical reformation of our letters has failed—and there have been many between the “real character” of Bishop Wilkins and the phonotypes of Isaac Pitman. The art of printing seems to have fixed the forms beyond the possibility of reconstruction.

1668.

1837.



